AMERICA IN THE WAR

II

THE VANGUARD OF AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS

The American Ambulance Field Service.

The drivers are from left to right: J. R. McConnell, Ned Salisbury, Herman Webster, A. Piatt Andrews, Inspector-General James W. Horne, Norman Barclay.

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AMERICA IN THE WAR

THE VANGUARD OF AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS

IN THE FIGHTING LINES
AND IN HUMANITARIAN SERVICE
AUGUST, 1914—APRIL, 1917

BY

EDWIN W. MORSE
AUTHOR OF "CAUSES AND EFFECTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY"

ILLUSTRATED

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TO THE MEMORY
OF THOSE HEROIC AMERICAN YOUTHS
WHO BY THEIR SELF-SACRIFICING DEVOTION
POINTED OUT THE PATH
OF DUTY AND HONOR
TO THEIR FELLOW COUNTRYMEN

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The Publishers desire to express their acknowledgment of the courtesy of various other publishing houses for the privilege of including selections from their books in the following pages. The complete list of books from which quotations have been used, which will be of value to the reader who may wish to pursue any one of these subjects in more detail, is as follows:

"Letters of Henry Weston Farnsworth of the Foreign Legion." (Privately Printed.)
"War Letters of Edmond Genet." (Charles Scribner's Sons.)
"Victor Chapman's Letters from France." (Macmillan Co.)
"The War Story of Dillwyn Parrish Starr." (Privately Printed.)
"Letters and Diary of Alan Seeger." (Charles Scribner's Sons.)
"Poems of Alan Seeger." (Charles Scribner's Sons.)
"Harvard Volunteers in Europe." (Harvard University Press.)
"Friends of France." (Houghton Mifflin Co.)
"Ambulance No. 10." By Leslie Buswell. (Houghton Mifflin Co.)
"With a Military Ambulance in France, 1914–'15." By Clarence V. S. Mitchell. (Privately Printed.)
"Journal from Our Legation in Belgium." By Hugh Gibson. (Doubleday, Page & Co.)
"Fighting Starvation in Belgium." By Vernon Kellogg. (Doubleday, Page & Co.)
"Headquarters Nights." By Vernon Kellogg. (Atlantic Monthly Press.)
"Flying for France." By James R. McConnell. (Doubleday, Page & Co.)
"With the French Flying Corps." By Carroll D. Winslow. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)
"Norman Prince." Edited by George F. Babbitt. (Houghton Mifflin Co.)

Selections have also been used from various periodicals, in several of which original publications were made, and to which credit has invariably been given in the text.

INTRODUCTORY

I

INTRODUCTORY

NO historian of the future will be able to ignore the important part which that small but heroic band, the Vanguard of American Volunteers, played in the great war to make the world safe for democracy. For it was they who were the voluntary leaders along the path which the people and the government of the United States, after more than two years and a half of hesitation, were to follow; and it was they who, by the inspiring example of their self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of the Allies, were largely instrumental in creating and in crystallizing public opinion among their own countrymen in favor of the entrance of the United States into the war.

A dozen volumes such as this would not suffice to give even the barest outlines of the records and achievements of these American Volunteers. All that can be attempted here is to gather together a few typical instances of

their devotion to a high sense of duty in whatever branches of the service they found themselves. Some of them enlisted under the inspiring leadership of Mr. Hoover for relief work in stricken Belgium and in devastated northern France; others, under the flag of the American Red Cross, carried surgical and medical help to invaded and plague-stricken Servia and to other points; others became drivers of ambulances over dangerous roads from the *postes de secours* to hospitals in the rear; still others, eager to make their influence felt more directly, joined the Foreign Legion of France or other French or British regiments; while a handful of the more daring spirits entered the French flying corps and formed the nucleus of what later was to become the Lafayette Escadrille.

Two aspects of this exodus of hundreds of young Americans to the service of the Allies are of especial interest—first, the motives that lay behind their action, and, secondly, the effects of their participation in the great conflict. A deep humanitarian impulse gave quick response to Mr. Hoover's appeal for Americans to go to the assistance of the Belgians, and was

of course the force behind all of the activities of the American Red Cross. A pure love of adventure, however, an irresistible desire to take some active part in the greatest war in the history of the world, was without doubt a compelling motive in many instances. It was with this desire that scores of young college men became ambulance drivers in France. Many of them, however, after witnessing the effects of the German methods of waging war and the heroic sacrifices which the French were making in defense of their fair land, sought entrance into branches of the French or English service where they could make their presence felt to greater military advantage. It was largely, no doubt, with the same desire to take active part in a great adventure that young Americans by the hundreds, from all parts of the United States, swarmed across the Canadian border to join the regiments forming and training in the early months of the war.

The figures, however, that stand out from all the rest are those of the small group of young Americans who, through love of France and admiration for the French, or through devotion

to the high ideals of freedom and liberty for which both France and England were pouring out their best blood, gave their services and, in not a few instances, made the supreme sacrifice of even life itself, as a measure of their devotion. It is true that the numbers of these young Americans were few, and the effect of their presence in the firing-lines was, in a military sense, insignificant and altogether negligible. But the influence of their spirit and of their example upon public opinion in the United States in the first two years and a half of the war was beyond all calculation. Scorning neutrality and regarding it as the refuge of the unintelligent, the irresolute and the timid among their own countrymen, they threw themselves into the conflict on the side of the Allies with heart and soul aflame, as if determined to prove that there were at least a few Americans who from the very beginning understood to the full the moral as well as the political issues involved in the mighty struggle. And, although they were only a handful, they succeeded by their zeal and their energy in keeping alive in the breasts of the Frenchmen and English-

men by the side of whom they were fighting the hope that some day the government and the people of the United States would see the causes and the possible consequences of the great conflict eye to eye with their own view of the issues involved. One has only to read the address of the French surgeon-in-chief at the burial of that gallant Dartmouth boy, Richard Hall, or the letter of the colonel commanding the Coldstream Guards to the parents of Lieutenant Dillwyn Starr, to see this hope reflected.

The great majority of these young volunteers were college-bred men of the best American type. The old law of *noblesse oblige* pointed the way to duty unerringly, and they followed it unhesitatingly. Only a few days before the United States Government declared war against Germany, in April, 1917, there were no fewer than 533 graduates and undergraduates of Harvard, for example, in some branch of service in Europe, either on the firing-lines, or in Belgium, or in connection with hospital and ambulance work; and the deaths of Harvard men in service up to that time had numbered twenty-seven.

Many other universities and colleges, from Bowdoin in the East to Stanford in the West, were equally well represented in proportion to their numbers. These were the young men who by faithful service were winning what Owen Wister, in his preface to "The Aftermath of Battle," calls "the spurs of moral knighthood." "And this host—for host it is—of Americans," added Mr. Wister, "thus dedicated to service in the Great Convulsion, helps to remove the stain which was cast over all Americans when we were invited to be neutral in our opinions while Democracy in Europe was being strangled to death."

The presence in the danger zones of these American volunteers and the occasional death of one of them in the performance of duty, made a deep impression in France as well as in America. The people of France, as Mr. Chapman points out in his preface to his son Victor's "Letters," were "living in a state of sacrificial enthusiasm for which history shows no parallel. Their gratitude to those who espoused their cause was such as to magnify and exalt heroism." The prime minister of France, M. Briand,

spoke of young Chapman, who was the first of the American aviators to fall in battle with an enemy air-ship, as "the living symbol of American idealism," adding: "France will never forget this new comradeship, this evidence of a devotion to a common ideal."

No one gave more effective expression to this "new comradeship" than Alan Seeger, whose "Poems," published in 1916, enabled thousands of readers to find their own souls in the reflection of that of the Poet of the Foreign Legion,

> Who, not unmindful of the antique debt,
> Came back the generous path of Lafayette,

and gallantly kept his "rendezvous with death" on the blood-soaked fields of Belloy-en-Santerre.

PART I

IN THE FOREIGN LEGION

II

WILLIAM THAW, LATE OF YALE

TO the young Americans with French sympathies who, at the beginning of the war, were eager to get into the real fighting as quickly as possible, the Foreign Legion offered the readiest means. Every able-bodied man who was willing to fight for France was welcomed as a brother to its ranks, whatever his nationality and without regard to his record. For scores of years the Legion had been famous, even notorious, as the refuge of soldiers of fortune, criminals, scapegraces and adventurers of all types—of all the outcasts of society in fact. This unenviable reputation was no obstacle, however, in the way of the young Americans who were anxious to get into the fighting-lines by the easiest and quickest means possible. They were willing to take their chances.

Their experiences varied because the regiments differed greatly in the character of the men. To Farnsworth and Morlae they were

picturesque and interesting. Chapman found himself among "the scum of the Paris streets," and doubted if six months' training would make them fit for active service. That some of the regiments failed to conform in character to the traditions of the Legion may easily have been the case, if Genet was correct in his statement of January, 1916, that there had been about 48,000 volunteers enrolled in that body since the war began, of whom there were then only about 5,000 left fit for service.

One of the first of the American youths to join this famous organization was William Thaw, of Pittsburgh, who had been a member of the class of 1915 at Yale. As was the case with several other Americans, Thaw was destined to win renown not in the Legion but in the flying corps. His experiences in the Legion, however, were described in his letters to his family, which were printed in the *Yale Alumni Weekly*, in such a racy, breezy manner and with such a genuinely American sense of boyish humor, that some selections from them are well worth quoting. Incidentally it may be noted that at the very beginning, when practically

all the rest of the world was in a state of more or less bewildered amazement at what was taking place in Belgium, this Yale youth grasped the essential, fundamental fact that this was to be a world-conflict between civilization and barbarism.

Under date of August 30, 1914, Thaw wrote:

I am going to take a part, however small, in the greatest and probably last, war in history, which has apparently developed into a fight of civilization against barbarism. That last reason may sound a bit grand and dramatic, but you would quite agree if you could hear the tales of French, Belgian and English soldiers who have come back here from the front. . . .

Talk about your college education, it isn't in it with what a fellow can learn being thrown in with a bunch of men like this! There are about 1200 here (we sleep on straw on the floor of the Ecole Professionel pour Jeunes Filles) and in our section (we sleep and drill by sections) there is *some* mixture, including a Columbia Professor (called "Shorty"), an old tutor who has numerous Ph.D.s, M.A.s, etc., a preacher from Georgia, a pro. gambler from Missouri, a former light-weight second rater, two dusky gentlemen, one from Louisiana and the other from Ceylon, a couple of hard guys from the Gopher Gang of lower N. Y., a Swede, a Norwegian, a number of Poles, Brazilians,

Belgians, etc. So you see it's some bunch! I sleep between the prize-fighter and a chap who used to work for the Curtiss Co. As for the daily routine it reminds me of Hill School, and then some; only instead of getting demerits for being naughty, you get short rations and prison.

Early in September the detachment was transferred to Toulouse, where it was joined by 500 veterans from the Legion in Africa. Nearly a month was spent in Toulouse in drilling and hardening the men for front-line work. Thaw was made a student-corporal. He wrote:

It is not a very exalted position, as you command only seven men. But it was a starter, and meant four cents a day instead of one, better shoes, and the power to put the guys you don't like in prison for four days instead of having to lick them personally! But of course now that we'll be with veterans there will have to be a lot of officers killed off before I get another chance. But it was a rare sight to see me drilling the awkward squad to which I was assigned. (A somewhat doubtful compliment to my abilities as a commander.) And that squad was some awkward. To add to my difficulties there were in it a chap from Flanders who spoke neither French nor English, a Russian who didn't speak French, a Frenchman

who didn't speak English and some Americans and English with various linguistic accomplishments. It took me two hours to get them to obey about twenty simple commands with any sort of precision. But it was a lot of fun, even if I did lose half my voice and about 3 kilos.

Finally, early in October, Thaw's company was moved north to Camp de Mailly, Châlons-sur-Marne. This paragraph from a letter dated October 4 indicates the nature of Thaw's work as a scout:

Yesterday I got a new job, being one of the two scouts or *éclaireurs de marche*, for our squad of 17 men. The other is a big Servian, who is beside me in ranks and who was wounded twice in the Balkan War. It's some job; you have to beat it off through the country, when your company is on the march, walk about three kilometres over rough ground, and, as far as I can see, get shot at, which gallant deed proves that the enemy are near and warns your comrades. The sergeant (he's always kidding us) consoled us by saying that he chose only men of great "sang froid" and skill with the rifle, and only the best marchers, whereupon I offered him a cigarette.

The cross-country "military marches," each man carrying the official equipment weighing

120 pounds,* were severe tests of the endurance of the men:

I was agreeably surprised to find that I got less tired than most, and didn't even mind carrying an extra gun the last five kilos. It's just a matter of getting used to it; but, take it from me, in comparison a game of football is almost a joke, for you don't get a rest every fifteen minutes, and a game doesn't last seven hours.

By the middle of October Thaw's battalion was in the front-line trenches. In the meantime his skill with the rifle had won for him promotion to soldier of the first class, with a red stripe on his sleeve. He found the life monotonous and disappointing, however. Under date of November 27 he wrote:

War is wretched and quite uninteresting. Wish I were back dodging street cars on Broadway for excitement. Am that tired of being shot at! Got hit in the cap and bayonet—Do you mind? Have been in the trenches now nearly six weeks. Haven't washed for twenty days. Expect to get a ten days' rest after another two weeks.

* This weight was confirmed in a later letter from Thaw.

A month later he summarized his experiences thus:

We didn't make an attack and were attacked only once, and I doubt that, for I didn't see any Germans. I didn't even shoot when they gave the order "fire at will," and when I told the excited, spluttering little sergeant that there was nothing to shoot at (it was very dark) he said, shoot anyway, which I did at the German trenches 800 metres away, for by that time they were replying, in astonishment, no doubt, to our fire, and their bullets were snipping through the trees at us—which is my idea of some battle.

The humorous side of one episode appealed strongly to this American youth:

Another very exciting experience, of which I'd nearly forgotten to tell you, was when one night we received "*sure* dope" that there would be an attack, six of us, under the American corporal, Morlae, went out as an advance guard into an open trench 100 metres in front of the main line, the idea being that while the Germans were killing us off the others would be warned and have time to get ready. It was a peachy idea, but "les Boches" never showed up, and the "exciting experience" consisted in standing for thirteen hours in three inches of water and nearly dying of fright when a dozen

cows came browsing across the meadows in perfect skirmish order. "C'est terrible, la guerre," as we Frenchmen say."

A month later Thaw was transferred at his request to the French aviation service.

III

MORLAE'S PICTURE OF THE LEGION

TWO days after the war began E. Morlae, the American corporal referred to by Thaw, left Los Angeles, California, for Paris. Born in California, Morlae was of French parentage, his father having served in the French army in the War of 1870. On arriving in Paris he enlisted in the Foreign Legion, and his father's record, with his general familiarity with military matters and his command of French, soon secured for him promotion to the rank of corporal. After serving in the Legion for more than a year he returned to the United States, wounded in the neck and knee.

Morlae contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly* for March, 1916, a description of the Legion's share in the battle of Champagne, the last week in the previous September, which was remarkable for its vividness and its graphic power. The scene of that portion of the battle which Morlae described was from Souain to Navarin,

where lay the immediate objective of the attack, the little fort of Navarin. This objective was attained, but at a heavy cost of lives. Of Morlae's section of sixty men only twelve survived, several of those being severely wounded.

In the following paragraph from his *Atlantic Monthly* paper, Morlae described the honors that were paid to the Legion before and after this battle, and gave the reasons therefor:

One day during the latter part of August, 1915, my regiment, the *2me.* Etranger (Foreign Legion), passed in review before the President of the French Republic and the Commander-in-chief of her armies, General Joffre. On that day after twelve months of fighting, the regiment was presented by President Poincaré with a battle-flag. The occasion marked the admission of the Légion Etrangère to equal footing with regiments of the line. Two months later —it was October 28—the remnants of this regiment were paraded through the streets of Paris, and, with all military honors, this same battle-flag was taken across the Seine to the Hôtel des Invalides. There it was decorated with the Cross of the Legion of Honor and, with reverent ceremony, was placed between the flag of the cuirassiers who died at Reichshofen and the equally famous standard which the Garibaldians bore in 1870–71. The flag lives on. The regiment has ceased to exist.

To the men of the Legion, which survived this blow as it had others, these honors, as Morlae points out, meant much. For they were no longer to be classed as pariahs and outcasts, as they had always been. Of the personnel of the Legion and of the reasons for the devotion of the Légionnaires to France, Morlae said:

Of the Legion I can tell you at first hand. It is a story of adventurers, of criminals, of fugitives from justice. Some of them are drunkards, some thieves; and some with the mark of Cain upon them find others to keep them company. They are men I knew the worst of. And yet I am proud of them—proud of having been one of them; very proud of having commanded some of them.

It is all natural enough. Most men who had come to know them as I have would feel as I do. You must reckon the good with the evil. You must remember their comradeship, their esprit de corps, their pathetic eagerness to serve France, the sole country which had offered them asylum, the country which had shown them confidence, mothered them and placed them on an equal footing with her own sons. These things mean something to a man who has led the life of an outcast, and the Légionnaires have proved their loyalty to France many times over. . . .

In my own section there were men of all races and all nationalities. There were Russians and Turks, an Anamite and a Hindu. There were Frenchmen from God knows where. There was a German, God only knows why. There were Bulgars, Servians, Greeks, Negroes, an Italian and a Fiji Islander, fresh from an Oxford education,—a silent man of whom it was whispered that he had once been an archbishop,—three Arabians and a handful of Americans who cared little for the quiet life.

Of this group of Americans Morlae wrote as follows:

But even the Americans were not all of one stripe. J. J. Carey had been a newspaper artist, and Bob Scanlon, a burly negro, an artist with his fist in the squared ring. Alan Seeger had something of the poet in him. Dennis Dowd was a lawyer; Edwin Boligny a lovable adventurer. There was D. W. King, the sprig of a well-known family. William Thaw, of Pittsburgh, started with us, though he joined the Flying Corps later on. Then there were James Bach, of New York, B. S. Hall, who hailed from Kentucky, Professor Ohlinger, of Columbia, Phelizot, who had shot enough big game in Africa to feed the regiment. There were Delpenche and Capdevielle, and little Trinkard, from New York. Bob Subiron came, I imagine, from the States in general, for he had been a professional automobile racer. The

Rockville brothers, journalists, signed on from Georgia; and last, though far from least, was Friedrich Wilhelm Zinn, from Battle Creek, Michigan.

The King referred to by Morlae was David W. King, a Harvard undergraduate of the class of 1916, whom Victor Chapman found in July, 1915, in a village in Alsace "rolling in luxuries," "smoking imported cigarettes and refusing to make a row even when the bill was three times what it should be."

In a letter which was reprinted in the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, King described how Zinn, who had become his best friend, was wounded a few months later:

The night of the 8th [of October, 1915] we came up here. It's the deuce of a place. We work on the front line all night, and they amuse themselves by dropping shrapnel and "marmites" into the working parties. During the day we are supposed to rest, but there are batteries all around us, and the consequence is that the Boches are always feeling around for them, and the guns themselves make such a fiendish racket we are almost deaf. To make things more cheerful, as we were going to work a shell burst near my best friend (F. W. Zinn) who was walking just ahead of me and he got

a piece in the side. It did not penetrate, but it made a bad contusion just under his heart, and I am afraid it smashed some ribs. There were no Red Cross workers near by, so I had to take him back. He could hardly breathe when I got him to the "poste de secours." Lucky devil! He will get a month's rest, but I miss him like anything, as friends are pretty scarce around here.

IV

HENRY FARNSWORTH, LOVER OF BOOKS

ONE young American volunteer in the Foreign Legion was killed in the battle for the Fortin de Navarin at the end of September, 1915. He was Henry Weston Farnsworth, of Dedham, Massachusetts, a graduate of Groton and of Harvard, of the class of 1912. His tastes were bookish, musical and artistic. Burton, Dostoievski, Tolstoi, Gogol, Ibsen and Balzac were favorites with him, although his studies in literature covered a much wider field—the English classics as well as the modern continental writers. After he was graduated he spent the summer in Europe; visiting Vienna, Budapesth, Constantinople, Odessa, Moscow, and St. Petersburg, revelling in the historical associations, the art collections and the music of these cities, and making odd friends here and there, as was his wont, and studying the people. His curiosity was insatiable, particularly as regards the Oriental peoples and the Russians.

When the European War broke out Farnsworth was in the city of Mexico, whither he had gone when the United States Government sent troops to Vera Cruz. In the meantime he had had some experience as a newspaper correspondent and reporter for the Providence *Journal* and had published a book, "The Log of a Would-be War Correspondent," describing his experiences and observations in the Balkan War in the autumn of 1912, the fascination of which he could not resist. Returning home from Mexico, he sailed for England in October, 1914, with no intention of taking active part in the war, but with the desire to become an onlooker, in the hope that he might write something about the great conflict that would be worth while. The air of London and Paris was full of military projects, and he was tempted in various directions. Finally, after a period of hesitation and uncertainty, he entered the Foreign Legion early in January.

From the "Letters of Henry Weston Farnsworth of the Foreign Legion" to the members of his family, which have been privately printed by his father, William Farnsworth, it is possible to follow him during the nine succeeding months.

He was under no illusions about the Germans. "Mad with envy," he writes, "is how they strike me. At the expression 'English Channel' they froth at the mouth." And his admiration for their Gallic adversaries was deep. "Nothing," he says, "can over-express the quiet fortitude of the French people."

Farnsworth, who, as we have seen, had a decided taste for odd characters, found his associates in his company of the Legion interesting studies. Under the date of January 9, 1915, he wrote:

In the first place there is no tough element at all. Many of the men are educated, and the very lowest is of the high class workman type. In my room, for instance, there are "Le Petit Père" Uhlin, an old Alsatian, who has already served fourteen years in the Legion in China and Morocco; the Corporal Lebrun, a Socialist well known in his own district; Engler, a Swiss cotton-broker from Havre; Donald Campbell, a newspaper man and short story writer, who will not serve in the English army because his family left England in 1745, with the exception of his father, who was a captain in the Royal Irish Fusileers; Sukuna, a Fijian student at Oxford, black as ink; Hath, a Dane, over six feet, whom Campbell aptly calls "The Blonde Beast" (*vide* "Zarathustra"); Von somebody,

another Dane, very small and young; Bastados, a Swiss carpenter, born and bred in the Alps, who sings—when given half a litre of canteen wine—far better than most comic opera stars and who at times does the *Ranz des Vaches* so that even Petit Père Uhlin claps; the brigadier Mussorgsky, cousin descendant of the composer, a little Russian; two or three Polish Jews, nondescript Belgians, Greeks, Roumanians, etc. I already have enough to write a long (ten thousand word) article, and at the end of the campaign can write a book truly interesting.

The more he saw of it the more picturesque and fascinating Farnsworth found the new life into which he had plunged. He liked the men and the spirit that prevailed in the Legion:

I am thoroughly at home by this time and good friends with everyone in the company, even including a Belgian whom I was forced to lick thoroughly. The two great Legion marching songs, "Car nous sommes tous les frères" and the old, the finest marching song in the world,

Soldats de la Légion
La Légion Étrangère,
N'ayant pas de patrie,
La France est notre mère,

are quite true at bottom, at least in the 15th company.

In course of time Farnsworth's regiment was moved to the front in northern France, and early in March he was writing from the trenches. The sector was quiet and little of importance happened except an occasional bombardment or some desultory rifle firing. He was often on night patrol in No Man's Land:

There is a certain fascination in all this, dull though it may seem. The patrol is selected in the afternoon. At sunset we meet to make the plans and tell each man his duty; then at dark our pockets are filled with cartridges, a drawn bayonet in the belt, and our magazines loaded to the brim. We go along the *boyau* to the *petit poste* from which it is decided to leave. All along the line the sentinels wish us good luck and a safe return. In the *petit poste* we clamp on the bayonets, blow noses, clear throats, and prepare for three hours of utter silence. At a word from the chief we form in line in the prearranged order. The sentries wish us luck for the last time, and the chief jumps up on the edge of the trenches and begins to work his way quickly through the barbed wire. Once outside he disappears in the beet weeds and one after another we follow.

Then begins the crawl to the appointed spot. We go slowly with frequent halts. Every sound must be analyzed. On the occasion of the would-be ambush, I admit I went to sleep

after awhile in the warm fresh clover where we lay. It was the Adjutant himself who woke me up with a slight hiss, but as he chose me again next night, he does not seem to have thought it a serious matter.

Then, too, once home we do not mount guard all the rest of the night, and are allowed to sleep in the morning; also there are small but pleasing discussions of the affair, and above all the hope of some night suddenly leaping out of the darkness hand to hand with the Germans.

In one of these night expeditions Farnsworth and his companions succeeded in sticking some French newspapers announcing Italy's declaration of war on the barbed wire in front of the German trenches. Pleased with their enterprise, their captain gave seven of them twenty francs for a fête. "What an unforgettable supper!" cries the young Légionnaire:

There was the sergeant, Zampanedes, a Greek of classic type, who won his spurs at Zanina and his stripes in the Bulgarian campaign. Since, he has been a medical student in Paris; that to please his family, for his heart runs in different channels, and he studies music and draws in his spare time. . . . We first fell into sympathy over the Acropolis, and cemented a true friendship over Turkish war songs and

Byzantine chants, which he sings with a mournful romanticism that I never heard before.

Then there was Nicolet, the Company Clarion, serving his twelfth year in the Legion, an incredible little Swiss, tougher than the drums of the fore and aft and wise as Nestor in the futile ruses of the regiment.

The Corporal, Mortens, a legionary wounded during the winter and cited for bravery in the order of the army. He was a commercial traveller in his native grand duchy of Luxemburg, but decided some five years ago to leave his debts and troubles behind him and become a Petit Zéphyr de la Légion Étrangère.

Sudic, a butcher from the same grand duchy, a man of iron physically and morally, but mentally unimportant.

Covalieros, a Greek of Smyrna, who might have spread his silks and laces at the feet of a feudal princess and charmed her with his shining eyes and wild gestures into buying beyond her means. He also has been cited for reckless gallantry.

Sukuna and myself brought up the list. We were all in good spirits and flattered, and I, being in funds, put in f. 10 and Sukuna the same. Some of us drank as deep as Socrates, and we ate a mammoth salad under the stars. Nicolet and Mortens talked of the battalion in the Sahara, and Zampanedes sang his Eastern songs, and even Sukuna was moved to Tongan chants. Like Æneas on Polyphemus's isle, I feel that some years hence, well out of tune

with all my surroundings, I shall be longing for the long warm summer days in northern France, when we slept like birds under the stars, among congenial friends, when no man ever thought of the morrow, and you changed horizons with each new conversation.

The letter from which the foregoing is a selection was written by Farnsworth to his mother on June 4, 1915. A month later the news from home that a friend of his was going to a training-camp in the United States where he expected to march five or six miles a day prompted him to give this vivid picture of an episode in the life of the Légionnaires:

The other day we were waked at 2 a.m. and at 3 sent off in a pouring rain for some indefinite place across the mountains for a divisional review. We went off slowly through the wet darkness, but about dawn the sun came out and, as is usual with the Legion, everybody cheered up, and at 7 a.m. we arrived at the parade ground after fifteen kilometres in very good spirits. Two regiments of Zouaves from Africa were already drawn up. We formed up beside them, and then came the two *tirailleurs* regiments, their colors with them, then the second *Étrangère*, two thousand strong, and finally a squadron of *Chasseurs d'Afrique*.

We all stacked arms and lay about on the grass till 8.30. Suddenly the Zouave bugles crashed out sounding the "*Garde à vous*," and in two minutes the division was lined up, every man stiff as a board—and all the time the bugles ringing angrily from up the line, and the short staccato trumpets of the *chasseurs* answering from the other extremity.

The ringing stopped suddenly and the voices of the colonels crying "*Baïonnettes aux canons*" sounded thin and long drawn out and were drowned by the flashing rattle of the bayonets going on—a moment of perfect silence, and then the slow, courtly-sounding of the "*Général! Général! qui passe!*" broken by the occasional crash as regiment after regiment presented arms. Slowly the General rode down the lines, the two Brigadiers and a Division General in his suite.

Then came the *défilé*. The Zouaves led off, their bugles playing "*As tu vu la casquette, la casquette.*" Then the *tirailleurs*, playing some march of their own, slow and fine, the bugles answering the scream of the Arab reed flutes as though Loeffler had led them. Then the Legion, the second *Étrangère* swinging in beside us at the double, and all the bugles crashed out with the Legion marching song, "*Tiens voilà du boudin pour les Belges*," etc. On and on went the bugles playing that light, slangy tune, some of the verses of which would make Rabelais shudder, and the minor variations of which bring up pictures of the Legion marching in

thin ranks in foreign, blazing lands, and the drums of which, tapping slowly, sound like the feet of the regiment scrunching through desert sand. It was all very glorious to see and hear, and to wind up the *chasseurs* went by at the gallop—going off to their quarters.

To wind up the day the Colonel took us home straight over the mountain—fourteen kilometres over mountain-goat tracks.* When we got in at 3.30 P. M., having had nothing to eat but a bit of bread, three sardines and a finger of cheese, few of the men were really exhausted. It was then I got your letter about the training camp.

In August Farnsworth's regiment was in Alsace. In September, however, it was on the march and took part in the bloody battle in Champagne toward the end of the month. His last letter was dated September 16, 1915. He was killed in the charge that his battalion made on the 28th, before the Fortin de Navarin. The Farnsworth Room in the Widener Memorial Library at Harvard, a large room for the leisurely reading of such standard books as Henry Farnsworth loved, was handsomely supplied with books, pictures and furniture by Mr. and Mrs. William Farnsworth, in memory of their son.

* Making about eighteen miles going and returning.

V

A DESCENDANT OF CITIZEN GENET

ONE of the most graphic narratives of the part which the First Regiment of the Foreign Legion played in the battle before Navarin, in which Farnsworth lost his life, is to be found in the "War Letters of Edmond Genet." Young Genet—he was only nineteen when he took part in this desperate engagement—was a great-great-grandson of Citizen Genet, whom the Revolutionary government of France sent to this country as its representative in 1792, and whose indiscretions led to the request that he be recalled. He did not return to France, but made his home in Albany, and later married the daughter of Governor Clinton.

Genet, whose home was in Ossining, New York, sailed for France at the end of January, 1915. He had already been in the service of the United States Navy, and was on the battleship *Georgia* in Vera Cruz harbor in the previous spring. He was, as he wrote his chum on the

eve of sailing, "born to be a wanderer." Yet he was a youth of great independence and of resolute will, so that when he came to a full realization of the nature of the conflict and of the peril in which his beloved France was placed, his decision was prompt and was followed by immediate action. His high sense of duty and the call of the blood left him no alternative but to take his chances in the great war, as he phrased it, with the French. He had no illusions as to the probable outcome of his venture, but his religion—he was a devout Churchman—enabled him to face the worst that might happen to him with composure of mind and with a resolute heart. "I expect to have to give up my life on the battle-field," he wrote to a friend. "I care nothing about that. Death to me is but the beginning of another life—better and sweeter. I do not fear it."

Early in February, 1915, Genet carried out the definite plan which he had formed before he left America of enlisting in the Foreign Legion. After nearly two months in various training-camps his regiment was put into the trenches in northern France, where, with alternate peri-

Members of the Foreign Legion on leave in Paris, July 7, 1915.

Seated in the centre is Edmond Genet, with William Dugan, from Rochester, N. Y., on his left. Standing, third from the left, is Joseph Lydon, from Boston, with Victor Chapman on his left.

ods of rest and mild trench warfare, he passed many weeks. Finally, on September 22, in a short letter to his mother, he wrote that a "big fight" was coming.

The letter in which Genet described his part in the battle which began on September 25 miscarried, and consequently he sent a second, at a much later date, giving the details. From this letter the following selections are made:

Leaving the camp of concentration that same night we marched to a town called Suippes and thence to a woods about three kilometres beyond and nearer the front. The country all around there is made up of many large plains, with here and there small wooded parts which were admirable hiding-places for troops. There we camped until the morning of the 25th, about a two weeks' period in which we were served the necessities for the coming fight—new clothes for old if required, masks for protection from gas, the metal helmets and many other things including the extra ammunition; 120 rounds is ordinarily carried per man and 250 for actual fighting. The latter is no light load. The last few nights of those two weeks we dug "leaders" to the trenches for the passage of extra troops. . . .

The night before the 25th our colonel read to us in the dusk the order from Gen'l Joffre

for the attack. The Division Marocaine was to be in the first reserve. The Colonial Division made the attack. Long before dawn on the 25th we marched to our position just to the rear of the first French line, to the west of the little village (then a mass of shattered ruins) of Sompey, amid a drenching misty rain. We had light loads in our sacks and plenty of cold rations in our musettes (food-bags). The bombardment of the German trenches before the charge was terrific. The German line looked like a wall of fire and hellish flames from the bursting shells. The batteries of both sides made the world sound like Hades let loose. From the sharp crack of the famous French 75's to the deep roar of the aerial torpedoes it was an incessant Bedlam. About nine o'clock a French aeroplane flew right over our first line, circled around and back. It was the signal for the French batteries to cease shelling the German first line and for the Colonials to charge. They did, and nobly too. Taking the German first line, with a vast number of prisoners, they forced the Germans back to their reserve lines.

Then it was that we began our advance in their rear as reserves. Passing through the leaders toward the old French line we passed scores of captured wounded Germans. Some of them, mere boys of 16 to 20, were in a ghastly condition. Bleeding, clothing torn to shreds, wounded by ball, shell and bayonet, they were pitiable sights. I saw many who sobbed with

their arms around a comrade's neck. We passed French dying and wounded being hurriedly cared for by the hospital attendants. Blood was everywhere and it was simply sickening. The smell of powder filled the air and to me it is one of the most disagreeable odors we encountered with the exception of what came later—that of decayed bodies of horses and mules and even men, left unburied for whole weeks. That is too horrible for more than mention.

We followed up the Colonials and passed part of the late morning in the captured German trenches. They were battered beyond description and filled with dead—mostly Germans. German equipments lay thrown everywhere, discarded in the flight. Many German wounded could be seen making their way painfully to the rear. I remember one poor fellow who must have been totally blinded for he walked directly into the barbed wire and had a most trying and painful time to get out. . . .

About two o'clock we began to advance under fire behind the Colonials and then it was that I had about the closest shave from death in all that month. Our section had to advance over a ridge and we must have been seen by a battery which was sending shells of 320 mm. calibre into the advancing Colonials. Somehow we felt that huge shell coming; how, I don't know, but we all just threw ourselves flat into the mud. If I had been one little hundredth of a second late I wouldn't be telling

the tale now. I felt that monster hurl directly over my head; the intake of air raised me at least an inch out of the mire which I was gripping with every finger and with all my might. The shell burst not more than three yards behind me and killed four of the section and wounded several others. My heart had one of the quickest jumps of its life. . . .

We continued on our advance until darkness set in and lay all that night in a drenching rain in watery mud. Sleep was practically impossible. Shells were dropping around us every few minutes and anyway the horrors of the day just closed were too awful to allow pleasant dreams or even sleep to follow. All night the cries of the dying could be heard. I felt as though I were in some weird nightmare. I wish it had been, for then I could have awakened and found it to be only a dream. As it was it was a grim reality.

Just after we arrived at that place, when darkness had set in, was when Dave Wheeler* showed his coolness. There was a false cry for us to charge and the Third Company, in which he was, started forward with bayonets on. The Commandant of the Battalion, seeing the mistake, jumped in front of the advancing and excited men and tried to check them. One of the sergeants of the Third helped him and Dave, cooler than the rest, did the same. The check succeeded and Dave told me afterward that

* Dr. David E. Wheeler, of Buffalo, N. Y., a member of the Legion and a warm friend of Genet's.

the Commandant asked who he was. The Commandant found a soldier's death directly in front of Dave on the 28th in our attack. Early the next morning I tried to find Dave and couldn't and so was very afraid that he had been killed in the previous day's advance.

We changed our position early that morning to a small woods behind the new French line which the Colonials were holding, and were under a terrific bombardment all the day, being in direct line between the dual fire of a French battery of 75's and one of the German 77's. The German shells landed nearer to us than they did to the French battery. That night our first lieutenant, a fine young man, was instantly killed by a bursting shell. We buried him where he fell like any other soldier.

Being out of rations, several of us had to go nearly six kilometres that night for new rations for the company. You can imagine how tired we were when we got back and it was raining again which didn't help sleeping a bit.

The following day we moved farther back to another woods, but here we got into a worse bombardment. We lost men there every day. To protect ourselves as much as possible from the bursting shells we dug individual trenches into the ground just large enough to lie in, but many a poor fellow merely dug his own grave for they are no protection should a shell fall directly into one on top of the occupant. It was hell and nothing less. That day I found Dave and felt much better for it. I guess he

did too for that matter. That was the 27th—only the third day of the horrors.

The 28th (it will live in my memory forever) brought no excitement until the middle of the afternoon. Then we were ordered to prepare to depart for the attack. The Colonel had chafed over continually being in reserve and had personally asked the General in command for permission to put the Légion to the front attack. His request was granted. The first and second companies of the First Battalion and the third and fourth of the Second Battalion were to take the advance. The other two companies of each battalion held the reserve. Ahead of us the Arab Tirailleurs made two strong charges and both times had to fall back. They were ordered to make a third and, refusing to face again the murderous fire of the German machine-guns, turned in flight.

Meanwhile we had started our advance in solid columns of fours, each section a unit. It was wonderful—that slow advance. Not a waver, not a break, through the storm of shell the Légion marched forward. Officers in advance with the Commandant at their head; it inspired us all to courage and calmness. We met the fleeing Tirailleurs and our officers tried to turn them back. I saw our Commandant, wrath written all over his face, deliberately kick one Arab to make him halt in his flight. Shells were bursting everywhere. One lost his personal feelings. He simply became a unit—a machine.

Crossing a clearing we came at last to a woods just in front of the German line. There we met the decimating fire of the machine-guns, bayonets were fixed, and the order given to advance on the run. A faint cheer rose above the ping-ping of the bullets. Leaping a trench containing the terrified Tirailleurs, we charged. The forward French line which the Colonial troops were holding was still before us. There was a slight pause when we got there. The sections formed into a skirmish-line and, being in the fourth section of our company, the Fourth, I got away over on the left flank. The Third Company was on our right. Everywhere men were falling. The fire was terrific. As I ran for the left with the section I could hear the bullets cutting the leaves and twigs all around me—ping, ping, they hissed as they struck the trees. They came from the front and the left, hissing death in our ranks 'til there were few of us left.

While the woods ended at the French line in front, they extended far beyond on our flank. We leaped the first line where the Colonials were. Their duty was to stay there and hold that line. We charged on, but somehow about fifty metres ahead of the line I found myself alone with one other young fellow from my section. The others who had leaped the French line with us were nowhere to be seen. Seeing this, we dropped flat behind a bush, thinking the rest would rush up behind us and continue the charge. The Germans had begun to shell the wood just ahead of us. The din was ter-

rific. Dead Tirailleurs were lying everywhere, killed in those two first charges, ghastly and bloody. There were none of the Légion around us to charge. I turned to my companion and said, "They're all dead here (motioning to the corpses); the section must be behind us; shall we beat it back?" He nodded, stood up and started back on the run. I followed and reached the Colonial line without a scratch. I never saw the young Italian again but heard a long time after that he had been wounded and was carried back that night.

Behind the Colonial line I found the two sergeants of my section with half a dozen men. They had retreated before my comrade and I had seen them, and were waiting there for further events. Darkness was falling. I had thrown away my sack in the commencement of the charge and in it were my rations—some bread and a tin of beef—and my tent. I had a mouthful of water in my canteen but nothing to eat. We lay there until after seven and then the Adjutant, the only officer left of our company, found us and the remnants of the Third and our company were gathered together to go back to where we were before the attack. A half kilometre back of the line the Major (the Battalion doctor) had five badly wounded men of the two companies and asked the Adjutant to let us carry them back to the field-hospital in the rear. Tents were secured, and with four of us to each tent we carried them nearly four kilometres over rough muddy ground to the

field-hospital. You can imagine the agonies of those five wounded men being carried along under such conditions. They stood it far better than I thought they would.

When the Adjutant counted us off in fours to carry them he counted just thirty-one, including himself, gathered there from the two companies of 250 each! I found my little S. American comrade safe among them and heard from a hospital attendant that he had seen Dave crawling off to the rear after the fight with a bullet wound in his leg. He said he had more pluck than any of them. Thus it was that I wrote to Mrs. Wheeler the next day and told her of Dave's condition and not to worry. As it was, she heard from him before she got my note, but just the same I was glad I had written. Brave Dave went down beside his captain, the last of his company in that section, and he saw his captain and the Commandant both make very brave ends.

The thirty-one of us reached our old camp about ten and dropped gladly into our little trenches for sleep. It was raining, there was an inch of water in my trench and I had no tent to put over me. I was soaked through, covered with mud, hungry, thirsty, and thoroughly exhausted but sleep was impossible. I dozed and shivered for the rest of the night, thinking of the afternoon's events and wondering fearfully whether Dave was alive and safely on his way to succor. I prayed it was so and dawn brought sunshine and some warmth.

We who were left looked around that morning to see who was there. Old faces were gone. Out of my squad of twelve there were only two of us left. We all had our little accounts to tell. Our Adjutant and the few sergeants left, at the order from the Colonel, got the Third and Fourth Companies together into one. There were, with those who turned up that day, about 120 all told—all that was left from nearly 500! We got soup and meat, a swallow of whiskey and wine, and tried to make ourselves comfortable. It was hard work. . . .

The next day I found some of the Americans in the other Battalion and learned of Farnsworth's death in the attack. No other American was lost in the First Regiment.

October 2nd we were drawn back to the rear to the camp where we were the first day at Champagne. The French were strengthening their position all over. New positions were being established for the batteries. All the counter-attacks of the German forces had failed. The French victory was complete.

Soon after this terrific battle Genet's regiment of the Foreign Legion went into retirement near Paris, and he saw no more active service in its ranks. During the winter he was in this rest-camp, with occasional visits to Paris, where he saw much of his friends the Wheelers, Dr. Wheeler having recovered from

the wound in his leg.* In the spring of 1916 Genet was able to secure a transfer from the Foreign Legion to the French aviation corps, a change for which he had been working since the previous autumn. His experiences as an aviator will be considered later.

*After serving as captain in the Canadian Army, Dr. Wheeler, when the United States entered the war, was transferred to the American forces with the rank of major. He served as regimental surgeon in Lorraine, at Cantigny, and at Château-Thierry, and was killed in August, 1918, while attending the wounded under fire.

VI

ALAN SEEGER, POET OF THE LEGION

THE fullest and the most serious and probably, as a consequence, the most valuable record thus far published of life in the Foreign Legion, is to be found in the "Letters and Diary of Alan Seeger." Seeger was somewhat older than the other American volunteers who were in the Legion and more mature in mind, having seen much of the world, having meditated deeply and having expressed himself in verse of enduring value. Then, too, it was vouchsafed to him, being in reserve yet by no means out of danger, to live through the battle of Champagne, so vividly described by young Genet, and to continue in the Legion until July, 1916, nearly two years, when he fell at Belloy-en-Santerre. His diary and letters, therefore, cover a longer period than those of any other American in the Foreign Legion.

Born in New York, of old New England

stock, in 1888, Seeger passed his boyhood on Staten Island. When he was twelve the family moved to the city of Mexico, where the youth lived two years, a period which left a deep impression upon his temperament and his tastes. He entered Harvard in 1906 from the Hackley School at Tarrytown, New York, having in the interval spent a year with a tutor in California. The first half of his college course was given to his studies and to miscellaneous reading, the latter half rather more to his friends. The members of his family were exceptionally gifted as writers and musicians, and his tastes were along similar lines. Even when a boy in the city of Mexico he and the other members of the family had issued a home magazine, and in college he was one of the editors of the *Harvard Monthly*.

The two years following Seeger's graduation in 1910 formed a period of hesitation and uncertainty as to his course in life. Finally he decided that what he sought might be found in Paris—beauty, romance, picturesqueness, the joy of life. Thus it happened that when the war began he was living among the students of

the Latin Quarter, absorbing experiences and recording his thoughts and feelings in verse. Before the war was three weeks old he, with a number of his fellow countrymen, enlisted in the Foreign Legion of France. He has explained, with simplicity and with obvious sincerity, the motive which led them to take this step. In a letter written from the Aisne trenches in May, 1915, to the *New Republic*, he said:

> I have talked with so many of the young volunteers here. Their case is little known, even by the French, yet altogether interesting and appealing. They are foreigners on whom the outbreak of war laid no formal compulsion. But they had stood on the butte in springtime perhaps, as Julian and Louise stood, and looked out over the myriad twinkling lights of the beautiful city. Paris—mystic, maternal, personified, to whom they owed the happiest moments of their lives—Paris was in peril. Were they not under a moral obligation, no less binding than [that by which] their comrades were bound legally, to put their breasts between her and destruction? Without renouncing their nationality, they had yet chosen to make their homes here beyond any other city in the world. Did not the benefits and blessings they had received point them a duty that heart and conscience could not deny?

A month later he wrote to his mother:

You must not be anxious about my not coming back. The chances are about ten to one that I will. But if I should not, you must be proud, like a Spartan mother, and feel that it is your contribution to the triumph of the cause whose righteousness you feel so keenly. Everybody should take part in this struggle which is to have so decisive an effect, not only on the nations engaged but on all humanity. There should be no neutrals, but everyone should bear some part of the burden. If so large a part should fall to your share, you would be in so far superior to other women and should be correspondingly proud. There would be nothing to regret, for I could not have done otherwise than what I did, and I think I could not have done better. Death is nothing terrible after all. It may mean something even more wonderful than life. It cannot possibly mean anything worse to the good soldier.

It was in this spirit of high chivalry and with a deep conviction of the justice of the cause for which he was ready to lay down his life that Seeger entered the Foreign Legion. Many weeks of hard drilling at Toulouse followed. Then his regiment, the Second Etranger, about 4,000 men, was transferred to the Camp de

Mailly, and by the middle of October he had hopes of soon being at the front. "I go into action," he wrote, "with the lightest of light hearts. The hard work and moments of frightful fatigue have not broken but hardened me, and I am in excellent health and spirits. . . . I am happy and full of excitement over the wonderful days that are ahead."

Seeger's hopes for early action were not fulfilled. His regiment found itself in the trenches in the centre of the battle line in northern France in the early winter, without any prospect of open warfare, and his disappointment was keen. In a letter to the New York *Sun*, written early in December, he described life in the trenches as follows:

This style of warfare is extremely modern and for the artillerymen is doubtless very interesting, but for the poor common soldier it is anything but romantic. His rôle is simply to dig himself a hole in the ground and to keep hidden in it as tightly as possible. Continually under the fire of the opposing batteries, he is yet never allowed to get a glimpse of the enemy. Exposed to all the dangers of war, but with none of its enthusiasms or splendid *élan*, he is condemned to sit like an animal in its burrow

and hear the shells whistle over his head and take their little daily toll from his comrades.

The winter morning dawns with gray skies and the hoar frost on the fields. His feet are numb, his canteen frozen, but he is not allowed to make a fire. The winter night falls, with its prospect of sentry duty, and the continual apprehension of the hurried call to arms; he is not even permitted to light a candle, but must fold himself in his blanket and lie down cramped in the dirty straw to sleep as best he may. How different from the popular notion of the evening campfire, the songs and good cheer.

Early in January, 1915, Seeger's regiment was moved to a ruined village, where he found the life much less trying than in the trenches. The village, however, was in the most dangerous part of the sector, close to the German lines, from which patrols came down almost every night to harass the French outposts. In a letter to his father, dated January 11, Seeger narrated an incident, illustrating the nature of this patrol warfare:

Four days almost without sleep, constant assignment to *petit poste*, sometimes 12 out of 24 hours on guard in the most dangerous positions. It was in one of these that I came for the first time in immediate contact with the

enemy in a most unfortunate affair. I was standing guard under the wall of a château park with a comrade when a patrol sneaked up on the other side and threw a hand grenade over, which sputtered a moment at our feet and went out without exploding. Without crying to arms, I left the other sentry on the spot and walked down to the *petit poste*, about 100 metres away and called out the corporal of the guard. We walked back to the spot together and had hardly arrived when another bomb came over, which exploded among us with a tremendous detonation. In the confusion that followed the attacking party burst in the door that covered a breach in the wall at this spot and poured a volley into our midst, killing our corporal instantly and getting away before we had time to fire a shot.

In a letter to the New York *Sun* Seeger described this incident with more particularity, adding this detail:

That night there was not much difference at *petit poste* between the two hours on guard and the two hours off. Every one was on the alert, keyed up with apprehension. But nothing happened, as indeed there was no reason to suppose that anything would. Only about midnight, from far up on the hillside, a diabolical cry came down, more like an animal's than a man's, a blood-curdling yell of mockery and exultation.

In that cry all the evolution of centuries was levelled. I seemed to hear the yell of the warrior of the stone age over his fallen enemy. It was one of those antidotes to civilization of which this war can offer so many to the searcher after extraordinary sensations.

Spring passed and summer came in comparative inactivity, though the regiment was moved from place to place. Early in July the Americans received permission to spend the Fourth in Paris, and Seeger notes that there were thirty-two to avail themselves of this privilege. The glimpses one gets of his American comrades are few and meagre; his French companions are apparently of more interest to him. His diary under date of July 27, however, notes that the regiment is billeted in a village in Alsace at the foot of the Vosges and that he and his collegemate, King, often spent the evening together at a little inn called Le Cheval Blanc. He passed some time, also, reading Treitschke's "Lectures on Politics," which Victor Chapman had lent him. On July 31 he made this entry: "Walked up to Plancher-les-Mines with Victor Chapman; there met Farnsworth who is in the *1er Etranger*, and we all had dinner together."

In August Seeger wrote in this vein to his mother:

Given my nature, I could not have done otherwise than I have done. Anything conceivable that I might have done had I not enlisted would have been less than what I am doing now, and anything that I may do after the war is over, if I survive, will be less too. I have always had the passion to play the biggest part within my reach and it is really in a sense a supreme success to be allowed to play this. If I do not come out, I will share the good fortune of those who disappear at the pinnacle of their careers. Come to love France and understand the almost unexampled nobility of the effort this admirable people is making, for that will be the surest way of your finding comfort for anything that I am ready to suffer in their cause.

The great offensive that was to be launched by the French at the end of September found Seeger in a state of high expectation. His regiment was to support the Colonials. In October he wrote to his mother as follows of his share in the battle:

The part we played in the battle is briefly as follows. We broke camp about 11 o'clock the night of the 24th, and marched up through ruined Souain to our place in one of the numer-

ous *boyaux* where the *troupes d'attaque* were massed. The cannonade was pretty violent all that night, as it had been for several days previous, but toward dawn it reached an intensity unimaginable to anyone who has not seen a modern battle. A little before 9.15 the fire lessened suddenly and the crackle of the fusillade between the reports of the cannon told us that the first wave of assault had left and the attack begun. At the same time we received the order to advance. The German artillery had now begun to open upon us in earnest. Amid the most infernal roar of every kind of fire-arms and through an atmosphere heavy with dust and smoke we marched up through the *boyaux* to the *tranchées de départ*. At shallow places and over breaches that shells had made in the bank we caught momentary glimpses of the blue lines sweeping up the hillside or silhouetted on the crest where they poured into the German trenches. When the last wave of the Colonial brigade had left, we followed. *Baïonnette au canon*, in lines of *tirailleurs*, we crossed the open space between the lines, over the barbed wire, where not so many of our men were lying as I had feared (thanks to the efficacy of the bombardment) and over the German trench, knocked to pieces and filled with their dead. In some places they still resisted in isolated groups. Opposite us, all was over, and the herds of prisoners were being already led down as we went up. We cheered, more in triumph than in hate, but the poor devils, ter-

ror-stricken, held up their hands, begged for their lives, cried "Kamerad," "Bon Français," even "Vive la France." We advanced and lay down in columns by two behind the second crest. Meanwhile, bridges had been thrown across trenches and *boyaux*, and the artillery, leaving the emplacements where they had been anchored a whole year, came across and took position in the open, a magnificent spectacle. Squadrons of cavalry came up. Suddenly the long, unpicturesque *guerre de tranchées* was at an end and the field really presented the aspect of the familiar battle pictures—the battalions in manœuvre, the officers, superbly indifferent to danger, galloping about on their chargers. But now the German guns, moved back, began to get our range and the shells to burst over and around batteries and troops, many with admirable precision. Here my best comrade was struck down by shrapnel at my side—painfully but not mortally wounded.

I often envied him after that. For now our advanced troops were in contact with the German second-line defenses, and these proved to be of a character so formidable that all further advance without a preliminary artillery preparation was out of the question. And our rôle, that of troops in reserve, was to lie passive in an open field under a shell fire that every hour became more terrific, while aeroplanes and captive balloons, to which we were entirely exposed, regulated the fire.

That night we spent in the rain. With port-

able picks and shovels each man dug himself in as well as possible. The next day our concentrated artillery again began the bombardment, and again the fusillade announced the entrance of the infantry into action. But this time only the wounded appeared coming back, no prisoners.

Seeger's regiment was held in reserve during September 28, the enemy's wire entanglements before a piece of woods to be attacked not having been sufficiently destroyed, and the commanding officer, who had replaced the wounded colonel of the regiment, refusing to risk his men. In his review of the battle Seeger admitted that, although the French had forced back the German line along a wide front, had advanced several kilometres and had captured many prisoners and cannon, the larger aim of driving the enemy across the Aisne, broken and defeated, had failed.

His admiration for the French was, however, undiminished. Under date of October 25 he wrote to his mother:

This affair only deepened my admiration for, my loyalty to, the French. If we did not entirely succeed, it was not the fault of the

French soldier. He is a better man, man for man, than the German. Any one who had seen the charge of the Marsouins at Souain would acknowledge it. Never was anything more magnificent. I remember a captain, badly wounded in the leg, as he passed us, borne back on a litter by four German prisoners. He asked us what regiment we were, and when we told him, he cried, "Vive la Légion," and kept repeating "Nous les avons eus. Nous les avons eus." He was suffering, but, oblivious of his wound, was still fired with the enthusiasm of the assault and all radiant with victory.

What a contrast with the German wounded, on whose faces was nothing but terror and despair. What is the stimulus in their slogans of "Gott mit uns" and "für König und Vaterland" beside that of men really fighting in defense of their country? Whatever be the force in international conflicts of having justice and all the principles of personal morality on one's side, it at least gives the French soldier a strength that's like the strength of ten against an adversary whose weapon is only brute violence. It is inconceivable that a Frenchman, forced to yield, could behave as I saw German prisoners behave, trembling, on their knees, for all the world like criminals at length overpowered and brought to justice. Such men have to be driven to the assault, or intoxicated. But the Frenchman who goes up is possessed with a passion beside which any of the other forms of experience that are reckoned to make life worth

while seem pale in comparison. The modern prototype of those whom history has handed down to the admiration of all who love liberty and heroism in its defense, it is a privilege to march at his side—so much so that nothing the world could give could make me wish myself anywhere else than where I am.

Seeger passed the winter of 1915–16 with his regiment in reserve. An attack of bronchitis took him out of the service for three and a half months, but did not diminish his ardor. "I shall go back the first of May," he wrote, "without regrets. These visits to the rear confirm me in my conviction that the work up there on the front is so far the most interesting work that a man can be doing at this moment, that nothing else counts in comparison." He passed a happy month in Paris. "I lived," he wrote, "as though I were saying good-by to life," as indeed he was.

After his return to the front-line trenches Seeger found time to write several sonnets which he sent to his "marraine," Mrs. Weeks. In two days, moreover, in the intervals of exhausting work with pick and shovel in *boyau*-digging, he composed the "Ode in Memory of

the American Volunteers Fallen for France," without doubt the most noteworthy poem which any American had contributed up to that time to the permanent literature of the war. He hoped to read it on Decoration Day before the statue of Washington and Lafayette in Paris, but this rare privilege was denied him, owing to the failure of his permission for forty-eight hours' leave to arrive in time. His last letter was dated June 28, and, anticipating active fighting, it was characteristic of him to end it with these courageous words:

> I am glad to be going in first wave. If you are in this thing at all it is best to be in to the limit. And this is the supreme experience.

Seeger was killed in the successful attack on Belloy-en-Santerre, which the Legion made late on the afternoon of July 4. He was in the first line of his company that swept across the plain before the village, and, with many of his comrades, was mowed down by a cross-fire of German machine-guns.

"Mortally wounded," wrote a participant in the attack in *La Liberté* of Paris, "it was his

fate to see his comrades pass him in their splendid charge and to forego the supreme moment of victory to which he had looked forward through so many months of bitterest hardship and trial. Together with those other generous wounded of the *Legion fallen*, he cheered on the fresh files as they came up to the attack and listened anxiously for the cries of triumph which should tell of their success.

"It was no moment for rescue. In that zone of deadly cross-fire there could be but one thought—to get beyond it alive, if possible. So it was not until the next day that his body was found and buried, with scores of his comrades, on the battle-field of Belloy-en-Santerre."

As William Archer well remarks in the introduction to the volume of Seeger's "Poems," "He wrote his own best epitaph in the 'Ode'":

And on those furthest rims of hallowed ground
Where the forlorn, the gallant charge expires,
When the slain bugler has long ceased to sound,
And on the tangled wires
The last wild rally staggers, crumbles, stops,
Withered beneath the shrapnel's iron showers:—
Now heaven be thanked, we gave a few brave drops,
Now heaven be thanked, a few brave drops were ours.

VII

VICTOR CHAPMAN AS A LÉGIONNAIRE

"VICTOR CHAPMAN'S Letters from France," dealing with his service for ten months in the Foreign Legion, after which he was transferred to the aviation corps, must be read in the light of the illuminating memoir which his father, John J. Chapman, prefaces to the volume. By far the most significant portion of this memoir is the vivid portrait of the boy's mother, half Italian by blood but wholly Italian in temperament and in the traits which she bequeathed to her son.

Young Chapman was graduated at Harvard in 1913. Before entering college he had spent a year in France and Germany, and on being graduated he became a Beaux-Arts student of architecture in Paris. When the war broke out he and his father and stepmother—his own mother had died when he was six—fled from Paris to London.

Even when he was a boy Chapman, according to his father, never really felt that he was alive, except when he was in danger. He did not care for books or for sports, but he was passionately fond of color and scenery. "If you could place him," says his father, "in a position of danger and let him watch scenery, he was in heaven. I do not think he was ever completely happy in his life till the day he got his flying papers." From his mother he got his large frame and his corresponding physical energy, which he loved to expend lavishly in the service of his friends. He "could eat anything, sleep on anything, lift anything, endure anything," says his father. "He never had enough of roughing it till he joined the Foreign Legion."

Chapman was in the Legion from the end of September, 1914, until August, 1915. During this period his battalion, though often under fire, was not actively engaged. He found the inactivity of trench life irksome, and felt that he was wasting his time. His chief interests were the odd characters in the Legion with whom he made friends, and the scenery. Here is his description of the Christmas truce of

1914, when, in certain parts of the line, the Germans and the Légionnaires fraternized:

Xmas in the trenches was interesting but not too exciting. Beginning the eve before, "conversations" in the form of calls. "Boches," "*ça va*," etc. In response: "*Bon camarade*," "cigarettes," "*nous boirons champagne à Paris*," etc. Christmas morning a Russian up the line who spoke good German wished them the greetings of the season, to which the Boches responded that instead of nice wishes they would be very grateful to the French if the latter buried their compatriot who had lain before their trenches for the last two months. The Russian walked out to see if it were so, returned to the line, got a French officer and a truce was established. The burying funeral performed, a German Colonel distributed cigars and cigarettes and another German officer took a picture of the group. We, of course, were one half-mile down the line so did not see the ceremony, though our Lieutenant attended. No shooting was interchanged all day, and last night absolute stillness, though we were warned to be on the alert. This morning, Nedim, a picturesque, childish Turk, began again standing on the trenches and yelling at the opposite side. Vesconsoledose, a cautious Portuguese, warned him not to expose himself so, and since he spoke German made a few remarks showing his head. He turned to get down and—fell! a bullet having entered the back of his skull: groans, a puddle of blood.

Two months later Chapman sent his father this pen-portrait of Nedim:

There was Nedim, Nedim Bey, a Turk—a black, heavy-faced Turk, and a typical Asiatic. He always wore two *passes-montagnes*, one pulled down round his chin so that his grizzled unkempt beard and nose protruded through. I believe he had been sent by the Turkish Government to study, and had worked in the French cannon factories. At any rate the Lieutenant had a high admiration for him which no one could understand. His French was wonderful! The article did not exist, but he was fond of the preposition *de;* as, *mon de pain.* He got permission at both places to build a separate hole for himself. After working night and day till it was finished he would light a roaring fire and sleep in an atmosphere warm enough to boil an egg. At the other position he had a dug-out about five feet long by two high, with a grate fire at the end of it. And he slept with his head against the fireplace! His love for fire resulted in his burning ends and patches of all of his clothes, and about his *abri* were always strewn pieces of burnt sacks. . . . He made an indestructible *créneau* from which he pumped shot. Inevitably the Germans soon located it and the other day he was hit in the head and evacuated.

Chapman's chief resource in the way of intellectual companionship was a Polish Jew

named Kohn. Of him he wrote as follows. under date of January 30, 1915:

My great joy, though vexation occasionally, is Kohn. Though of such a lovable and child-like innocence of character, he is a softy from having been always pampered. His learning is immense. I picked up a New York *Times* last night—article by G. B. Shaw. So I casually asked Kohn, who was entirely between the sack curtains, what kind of Socialist was Shaw? "A Fabianist," and with that he gave me an account of the growth of Socialism in England, how it influenced the continents—the briefest kind of a sketch of the points of divergence between Socialism and Anarchism. Well, I was numbed by slumber soon and had to beg him to leave off till I was in a more receptive mood. And Political Economy is not his line, for he says mathematics is his specialty. With that he is of an artistic temperament, almost mystic, in his way of doing things. Herédia used to say that Kohn did the rude physical work as though he was performing a religious rite: in fact, with such devotion and zeal that he soon wore himself down and became more subject than any of us to the *cliché* we all suffered from.

Three weeks later, in a letter to his uncle, Chapman gave the details of the death of his friend Kohn, "shot beside us in front of our

abri while taking observations with field-glasses of hills to the northeast." Chapman missed his companionship very much.

After his regiment was transferred to Alsace Chapman met several Americans who were in other regiments of the Foreign Legion—Alan Seeger, Henry Farnsworth, and David King. In the company of these men, all of whom, as it happened, had been at Harvard, and in a beautiful valley among the foot-hills of the Vosges, Chapman was "very happy." He was, however, to attain to his highest point of happiness, as will be revealed later, as an aviator.

PART II

WITH FAMOUS BRITISH REGIMENTS

VIII

JOHN P. POE, OF THE FIRST BLACK WATCH

ON the official records of Princeton he was known as John Prentiss Poe, Jr., of Baltimore, of the class of 1895. To his college mates he was known as Johnny Poe. He was eminently a man of deeds, not words. When in his freshman year he was elected president of his class, chiefly for the reason, rival candidates alleged, that he was "the homeliest man in the whole bunch," this was his speech of acceptance:

Fellows, I am proud of the honor you have bestowed upon me. My face can't be ruined much, so I'll go in all the battles with you head first. Nominations are now in order for vice-president.

This was the martial spirit that animated Johnny Poe, not only during his college career, when, like his brothers, he won fame on the football-field, but throughout his whole life.

The softness and ease of peace had no attractions for him; his one ambition was to get into the thick of a good fight, "head first."

The army offered the best outlet for his superabundant energies. So in the war with Spain, in 1898, we find him in Cuba with the Fifth Maryland Regiment. But he participated in no fighting. The taste, however, which he had got of army life made him hungry for more, and so, in the hope of seeing some real fighting, he joined the regulars, and in 1899 he was in the Philippines, a private in the 23d United States Infantry. But he was again disappointed; the campaign was tame. He did not give up, however. In 1903 he served with a detachment of Kentucky militia in the suppression of a mountain feud.

Late in the same year, in November, when there was considerable excitement on the isthmus because of the revolt of Panama from Colombia, Poe thought that "the real thing" might be within his grasp, if the United States Government sent troops to the scene. Accordingly he went to Washington and wrote a characteristic letter to the commandant of the Ma-

rine Corps, offering to enlist for active service. The letter was as follows:

> I understand that the *Dixie* is to take a battalion of marines to Colon from League Island next week. . . . I wouldn't mind enlisting except that I might be put to guarding some colony of land crabs 200 or 300 miles from where the fighting was going on, as in the Philippines, where the only thing our company did was to make the Sultan of Sulu sign a receipt for the 125 dollars Uncle Sam gave him. If I were to go there, to Panama, and not see any service, I would feel that if I were to go to Hades for the warmth, the fires would be at least banked, if not altogether extinguished, owing to furnaces being repaired. I was introduced to some cow-punchers in New Mexico by Mike Furness, '91, as "the hero of two wars, whose only wounds are scars from lying on his bunk too much." I must outlive that reputation.

Impressed by the unusual tone of this letter, General George F. Elliott took Poe himself over to John D. Long, then Secretary of the Navy, and laid the case before him. Secretary Long was so amused by the letter and so pleased by the writer's soldierly spirit that he ordered the necessary arrangements to be made for Poe to

join the marines. He sailed on the *Dixie* and was made a sergeant. He refused, however, to accept the position, preferring to remain in the ranks. His reason was that he did not care for authority and disliked responsibility, even the small share that would attach to a non-commissioned office. He wanted to enjoy the pleasure of fighting independently, as an individual, without the care of controlling other men. Again, however, he was thwarted in his desire to get into active service; and Poe regarded active service, according to Captain Frank E. Evans, editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette*, from which the foregoing facts are taken, as "the acme of adventure, the greatest game in the world." There was no fighting of any consequence on Panama, and he returned to the United States.

Poe had to wait until 1914 for the great opportunity of his life, which the war in Europe presented. At last he saw his chance to get his fill of real fighting in what promised to be the most stupendous war of all time. He went to Canada immediately and volunteered. Reaching England, he was transferred to the heavy

artillery. A little experience, however, in this branch of the service was enough for him. Long-range fighting was not to his taste, and he again succeeded in transferring to the First Black Watch, the Scottish regiment famous in Great Britain's military annals, with a record of more than one hundred and fifty years of service.

Thus in the spring of 1915 Poe was endeavoring to make himself at home among the "Ladies from Hell," as the Germans later dubbed these kilted Scots, whom they found to be fierce fighters—a member of A Company, 3d Platoon, First Black Watch, stationed in the trenches in northern France. Late in the summer of the same year Andrew C. Imbrie, secretary of the Princeton class of '95, received a letter from Poe, dated July 24, in which he acknowledged the receipt of no fewer than one hundred and thirty post-cards, "so far," from his classmates, the suggestion for such a demonstration of the affection and esteem in which Johnny Poe was held by his fellows having been made by Imbrie in the previous spring. Poe wrote: "I am trying to feel more at home in a kilt; and while

they are cool, the legs get dirty for quite a way above the knees." He went on as follows:

Of course we are going to win; but the "Limburgers" are putting up a great fight. What business have the "Square Heads" to start on the downward course the Empire which weathered the Spanish Armada, the Dutch under De Ruyter and Von Trump, the "Grand Monarch" and Napoleon?

Aren't you sorry I'm such a shark on history?

The Black Watch carried a German trench on May 9th after several regiments had tried and failed. It was taken with the piper playing the "Hieland Laddie."

A month after this letter was written Johnny Poe was killed in a charge of the Black Watch before Hullock, in northern France, eight or ten miles east of Béthune, a part of the great drive of the Allies in the last week of September. A letter to Poe's brother, Edgar Allan Poe, from the captain, D. Lumsden, of Poe's company, dated November 25, 1915, and reproduced in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, gave some details as to how Poe met his end:

In reply to your letter of the 11th of November, I have made inquiries about your

brother's death. He was killed on September 25 in the big engagement, while he was working with brigade bombers. He was advancing with bombs to another regiment when he was hit by a bullet and killed instantly. This happened roughly at 7 a.m., soon after the great advance began, and he is buried with several of his comrades on the left of the place called "Lone Tree," and a mound marks the grave.

I was greatly grieved to hear that he had been killed, as he was all that a good man and soldier could be. He was the most willing worker in my company and was in my platoon before I took command of the company when our captain was killed.

I offer you and all his relatives and friends my deepest sympathies on your great loss. But it is a comfort to think that he had lived a fine life in the finest way a man can.

The evidence of another officer is quoted that Poe "was the most popular fellow in the company, having been offered promotion, but he refused it," preferring as always to fight in the ranks. Poe Field at Princeton, with its memorial flagstaff, from which the national colors always fly, attests Poe's popularity among his college mates. His relation to football was such that there was a peculiar appropriateness in the Memorial Football Cup which in 1916 his

mother presented to Princeton, to be given each year to that member of the team who exemplified in the highest degree the traits which were conspicuous in Poe himself—(1) loyalty and devotion to Princeton's football interests; (2) courage, manliness, self-control, and modesty; (3) perseverance and determination under discouraging conditions, and (4) observance of the rules of the game and fairness toward opponents.

IX

DILLWYN P. STARR, OF THE COLDSTREAM GUARDS

IT is doubtful if any one of the American youths who entered the war in its early stages in behalf of the Allies saw more varied service than did Dillwyn Parrish Starr, of Philadelphia, whose father, Dr. Louis Starr, has had printed for private circulation a memorial volume, "The War Story of Dillwyn Parrish Starr." For at first Starr drove an ambulance in Richard Norton's corps in northern France and in Flanders; then he served with an English armored motor-car squadron, under the command of the Duke of Westminster, in Flanders; then, from early in the summer of 1915 until November, he was in charge of a motor-car squadron in Gallipoli; finally on his return he joined the Coldstream Guards, accepted a commission as second lieutenant, and was killed while gallantly leading two platoons in a charge

on September 15, 1916, having seen two years of varied service. At the time of his death he had reached the rank of first lieutenant.

Starr's desire at the outset was, as he expressed it, "to see the war," and so great was his eagerness to get to the field of operations that he shipped as a sailor on the liner *Hamburg*, which the American Red Cross sent abroad the middle of September, 1914. By the end of October he was driving an ambulance, a powerful Mercedes, on the Belgian frontier. Starr's experience in the ambulance service opened his eyes to the nature of the struggle upon which the Allies had entered and to the real character of their enemy, and made him long, as he said later, "to get at them with cold steel."

When, therefore, an opportunity came to effect a transfer to the British Armored Car Division, he grasped it eagerly. Early in March, 1915, Starr was near the British front lines in northern France, as one of the crew of a heavy armored car carrying a three-pound gun, in the squadron under the Duke of Westminster. An entry in his diary, with its amusing anticlimax in the last sentence, describes the

work of his car in a fight near Neuve Chapelle, southeast of Armentières:

March 13. Hot day! Up at 3 A. M. and on guard. Shells still passing over and falling in town [Laventie]. The Duke came at 9 o'clock to take us out. Went in same direction as yesterday afternoon but to more advanced post. Heavy fighting going on. Took up position 200 yards south of cross-roads at Fauquissart, behind some buildings that were half battered down. Got range of house occupied by Germans who were holding up our advance and fired forty-two shells, all telling and driving them out. They were shot down by our infantry, who occupied what was left of the building a short time afterward. Enemy artillery found us, and their shells began dropping all about us; also under rifle fire and had to keep cover. Shells were striking ten yards away in the mud, and one splashed water into the car. Finally obliged to back away, as road too cramped to turn; moved very slowly and it seemed we were going to get it sure—close squeeze! Got back to Laventie at 11 o'clock, and in afternoon painted car and had my hair cut.

Like Johnny Poe of the Black Watch, Dill Starr, as he was called by his classmates at Harvard, where he was graduated in 1908, was a football player of note, having won a place

on the university team. A far-away echo of his gridiron days is heard occasionally in his diary. Thus he notes, in anticipation of immediate active service:

> In afternoon were told to get some sleep and I did, sitting in chair. At four o'clock had tea. Thinking of going out gives me the same feeling as before a football match.

Nearly a year and a half later, when he was a lieutenant in the Coldstream Guards, in France, a match game of soccer, of which Starr knew little or nothing, was arranged with a team from the crack rival regiment in the British service, the Grenadier Guards. Starr was persuaded, much against his will, to play with his fellow Coldstreamers, with this result:

> The match with the Grenadiers came out a tie. I was lucky enough to make a goal for our side in the last thirty seconds. The score was three all.

In May Starr was gazetted sublieutenant in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserves, and in June, after a period of further study in gunnery, he sailed, with another officer and twenty-five

men, for Gallipoli. The evidence of Starr's letters and diary will be valuable to the historian who seeks the causes for the ghastly failure of that campaign. They were, in a sentence, according to Starr, bad organization, bad management, lack of foresight and lack of energy.

Having landed, the middle of July, 1915, at Cape Helles, he outlined the situation as it appeared to him a week later:

> This is the most wonderful looking place I ever saw, the whole ground is covered with dugouts, and even the mules have their little shelters. The hill, Achi Baba, is only about three miles away, so you can imagine how far we have advanced. On the first day of the landing we were further advanced than we are now; the troops, you see, had no food, water, etc., so they had to fall back after the first rush. The Turks shell the Peninsula very often, but don't do an awful lot of damage.

Of the costly and futile attack by the British on the hill of Achi Baba, early in the following August, Starr wrote:

> Well, the attack has been made and was a complete failure here. Almost four thousand men went out and very few came back. Some

monitors and ships bombarded Achi Baba for two hours. The Turks during this moved down into a gully and came back after it to their second line and massed four deep to meet our men. I was on higher ground with four guns and could clearly see our charges of the 6th and the morning of the 7th. The men went out in a hail of bullets and it was a wonderful sight to see them. Many of them fell close to our parapets, though a good number reached the Turkish trenches, there to be killed. On the morning of the 7th the Turks made a counter attack and drove our men out of the lightly-held trenches they had taken. Our guns fortunately took a lot of them; my two guns fired a thousand rounds into their closely formed mass.

Under orders Starr returned to England late in November, to find that the Armored Car Division had been disbanded. At the suggestion of his college mate, Walter G. Oakman, Jr., who had been with him in both the ambulance service and the Armored Car Division, and who was then in the Coldstream Guards, Starr decided to accept a commission, which had been offered to him, as second lieutenant in the same regiment, one of the most famous in the British Army. He thereupon went into

strict training which lasted six months, until midsummer, 1916. Having similar tastes, especially in sports, he fraternized cordially with his fellow officers, fell in easily with the traditions of the regiment, and looked forward with eagerness to the time when he could lead his men in a charge. To do this was the highest point which his ambition as a soldier touched.

The regiment saw some trench work in August and early in September, but was in no serious engagement until the middle of the month. Under date of September 11, four days before he was killed, Starr wrote a letter to his friend, Harold S. Vanderbilt, in the course of which he said:

I came out to France on the 11th day of July and am now in the 2nd Battalion Coldstream Guards. We expect to have a very hot time within the next few days. I believe we are going to hop the parapet, so there is a good chance of my getting back to England with a "blighty" within the next week. There is a lot of hell popping about here and the artillery fire is something stupendous.

Things are looking a little better for the Allies now, although it is not over yet by a long shot.

The last letter from him was written the following day, September 12. In it Starr said:

> They hope here that we shall break through the German lines, but I have my doubts. There is a chance, however, and if we do it will make all the difference in the world.

They didn't break through, but they attained their immediate objective, making possible the capture of Les-Bœufs the next day.

On the 15th the three battalions of the Coldstream Guards attacked the enemy near Ginchy, a few miles east of Albert. They drove the Germans out of their three lines of trenches, but at heavy cost, a nest of machine-guns, which the British tanks had failed to silence, taking a frightful toll of lives. Lieutenant Starr, leading his two platoons, was caught by this enfilading fire and killed as he sprang upon the parapet of the first German trench.

In a letter written from the hospital to Dr. Starr, Corporal Philip Andrews, of Starr's platoon, described this charge:

> The order then came to charge the trench; in that he got hit while leading us in the charge.

I did not see him fall, but was told while in the captured trench that he had been shot through the heart. We all knew we had lost a splendid leader who knew no fear. He knew, and so did I, that we should have a terrible fight to gain the trench, but he was cool and cheered up all his men, and I am sorry he did not live to see the spirit he had put into them in the final charge. He died a hero, always in front of us.

Colonel Drummond-Hay, commanding the Coldstream Guards, wrote to Dr. Starr:

Previously to the War we had ties which kept the Regiment in very friendly touch with the U. S. A., but now we are bound to you by a very much closer bond, your son, and others like him, who never rested till they were able to give us their active assistance in upholding the honor of the Regiment in this tremendous War, and this will never be forgotten in the Regiment, as long as its name endures.

To have voluntarily given his life as your son has done for the cause of right and in support of an abstract principle, is quite the noblest thing a man can do. It is far higher than giving it in fighting to safeguard one's own Hearth and Home, and for the maintenance of the Empire of which one is one's self a unit. And, believe me, we greatly appreciate this spirit in which so many Americans are fighting on our side.

PART III

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS IN SERVIA

X

DR. RYAN UNDER FIRE AT BELGRADE

THE young American volunteers in the trenches held no monopoly of the quality of high courage in the face of great danger. The surgeons and nurses of the American Red Cross possessed this trait also. They had occasion to show it in Servia when, at the outbreak of the war, the Austrians fell upon that unfortunate little country, which sent out a cry for help that the American Red Cross was quick to answer. Early in September, 1914, the first of three Servian units sailed from New York and, reaching Greece, went direct to Belgrade. The surgeon in charge was Dr. Edward W. Ryan, of Scranton, a graduate of the Fordham University Medical School and a man of wide experience in administrative as well as in hospital work. Dr. Ryan's two assistants, also graduates of the same medical school, were Dr. James C. Donovan and Dr. William P. Ahern.

They were accompanied by twelve trained nurses and carried abundant hospital supplies.

Under date of October 20, four days after the arrival of the unit in Belgrade, Dr. Ryan wrote to the Red Cross headquarters in Washington as follows of the conditions as he found them:

> We arrived at this place on October 16 and were immediately put in charge of the big hospital here. Since starting we have had no time for anything but work and sleep. Many of the wounded had not been dressed for several days, and as we have about 150 and it is necessary to dress them every day, it is 11 o'clock before we get through and some nights later. . . . The cases turned over to us are in many instances of long standing and require constant attention. New cases are arriving steadily and we will be overrun in a very short time. Surgeons are scarce here, and as we have about 50,000 wounded scattered about the country, you can readily see what the conditions are.

Belgrade contained about 120,000 inhabitants. In the early months of the war the city, which lies on the south bank of the Danube, changed hands several times before the Servians evacuated it finally, being subjected to

three bombardments. The military hospital, of which Dr. Ryan took charge on his arrival, was on a high hill overlooking the city and was frequently under fire.

The following weeks were full of exciting experiences for the American surgeons and their nurses. In a letter written from Nish, under date of December 26, and published in the *Red Cross Magazine*, Dr. Ryan described what had occurred. Since November 25, he said, he had had under his care in Belgrade five hospitals with about forty buildings, being assisted by about nine Servian doctors and one hundred and fifty nurses, and having about one thousand two hundred patients. He was also in charge of the insane hospital and the civil, surgical, and medical hospitals in the city. He continued:

When the Servians evacuated Belgrade they turned everything over to me. When you think that they came to me at 2 o'clock in the morning and said they were all going away and I was supposed to remain and take charge of all the hospitals, you can imagine my feelings. I did the best I could for and with them. When the Austrians came in, the non-combatant Ser-

vians all came to me for food. I had to get bread for about 6,000 poor people every day, some of which I bought, but the greater part of which was given to me by the Austrians.

When the Servian troops left they took with them about 200 of our patients, leaving 100 behind. Five days after the Austrians arrived I had 3,000 patients, all very seriously wounded and many with frozen hands and feet that necessitated amputation. Many of them had been on the road six or seven days before we got them, and many did not even have the first dressing.

Before the Servians retook Belgrade 6,000 wounded passed through my hands. As it was impossible to handle them, I told the Austrians they would have to send them into the interior of Hungary, which they did. When they left they took with them all of their wounded with the exception of 514 which I still have.

In addition to these men, Dr. Ryan had in his care when he wrote about 250 Servian wounded. "The Servians," he added, "are very grateful, and when you remember that they have about 60,000 wounded of their own, every little helps."

XI

FIGHTING TYPHUS AT GEVGELIA

IN view of the conditions in Servia two more units of the American Red Cross were despatched the middle of November to the assistance of Dr. Ryan. They were under the charge of Dr. Ethan Flagg Butler and of Dr. Ernest P. Magruder, both of Washington, D. C., Dr. Butler having general control of the force. Assisting them were Drs. James F. Donnelly, of Brooklyn, Clapham P. King, of Annapolis, and Morton P. Lane, of New Orleans, with twelve trained nurses. As the Servian Government had established itself at Nish, it was decided that these two new surgical units should make their headquarters at Gevgelia, a town of about 7,000 inhabitants on the railway running south from Nish to Saloniki on the Greek coast.

Dr. Butler and his staff reached Gevgelia in December, and found themselves face to face

with a difficult situation. The following extract from a private letter from Dr. Butler, dated Christmas day, which was published in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*—Dr. Butler was graduated at Princeton in 1906—defined the situation:

> Now we have on our hands some thousand or so wounded, both Servian and Austrian, in a large tobacco factory. There is no need to say more than that Sherman must just have come from a military hospital when he uttered his trite description of war. We are, however, taking over an old storage house wherein there have been no patients and which, therefore, comes into our hands sweet and clean. In this we hope to establish a couple of operating rooms, and ward space for 175 patients, choosing for this building the more severely wounded.

The greatest need that confronted Dr. Butler was for an abundant supply of pure water. Even the surgeons and nurses were under the necessity of making "an occasional run for a hot bath and a glass of water" to Saloniki, a morning's ride on the railway-train. At this time no infectious or contagious disease had made its appearance, but Dr. Butler saw

clearly that the conditions were such as to breed a veritable pestilence. In a second letter he wrote:

> Yet we are going to stick to the game and beat them in spite of themselves. We will just hammer, hammer at the local authorities and at the Government in Nish, until they let us make a clean place of this and keep it clean.

Not many weeks passed after this before the situation became desperate, owing to the outbreak and rapid spread of the dreaded typhus and typhoid fevers in and around Gevgelia, where the sanitary conditions were about as bad as they could be. The pestilence attacked the members of the two American units. Dr. Butler himself was the only one of the American surgeons who escaped an attack, more or less severe, of typhus, and at one time no fewer than nine of his twelve nurses were typhus patients at Gevgelia. Although he was authorized by cable to transfer his entire staff to Saloniki, Dr. Butler stuck resolutely and courageously to his post in Gevgelia, and, with four of his party in the delirium that accompanies typhus, could write in this admirably restrained

temper to the home office of the American Red Cross:

In regard to the present personnel of the units, I do not advise withdrawal or even change of location within Servia, but I feel that before other members are sent to this country your office should weigh seriously the risks that everyone will have to run—risks from disease that are considered rightfully preventable in our home country—and decide whether or not the units are to be kept up to their full quota or allowed to gradually decrease in number as one after another the original members become sick and are invalided home. I am sure, from the events of the past two weeks, that it is only a question of time before each member contracts some sickness of sufficient gravity to make his or her return to America necessary.

Two of the American surgeons succumbed to the disease. Dr. Donnelly died on February 22, and Dr. Magruder, who had been transferred to Belgrade to assist Dr. Ryan, died early in April. It was the privilege of Sir Thomas Lipton, who saw Dr. Donnelly when he was ill, to carry out his last wishes. One of these was that if he did not pull through he should be buried with the American and Red

Cross flags wrapped around his body. A recent financial report of the American Red Cross records a substantial sum as set aside for pensions to the widows of these two surgeons who gave their lives to the cause of humanity.

Meanwhile help was being sent to Dr. Butler by the American Red Cross. In response to a call for volunteers Dr. Reynold M. Kirby-Smith, of Sewanee, Tennessee, and three nurses left their station at Pau, France, and hastened to Gevgelia. In February Dr. Earl B. Downer, of Lansing, Michigan, left the United States, also under Red Cross auspices, to go to the aid of Dr. Butler, and in March more trained nurses were despatched on the same mission. Typhus, however, had become too virulent and too wide-spread to be combated successfully by so small a force, and steps were at once taken to organize and to send to Servia a sanitary commission for the express purpose of stamping out the plague from which thousands had already died.

Dr. Kirby-Smith, Dr. Butler, and Dr. Downer, leaving Gevgelia to be taken care of by the Sanitary Commission, went to Belgrade to the

assistance of Dr. Ryan, who meanwhile had fallen ill with typhus. Summarizing later the work of the American Red Cross in Belgrade, Dr. Downer stated that in little over a year 20,000 sick and wounded, including all nationalities, had been cared for. "During the recent German invasion," he said, "we cared for 4,000 wounded in a period of thirty days." Describing the daily routine of himself and Dr. Butler, he said:

> In the month of April Dr. Ethan F. Butler and myself did all the surgical and medical work of the hospital. We operated each day from 8 A. M. to 2 P. M., and after that visited 800 patients. This was our daily routine. Each day we made a rigid search of the wards for new typhus cases, which were promptly sent to the isolation hospital. At this time most of our nurses and doctors, including the director, Dr. Ryan, were ill from typhus. Dr. Reynold M. Kirby-Smith, who was in charge at this time, took care of the executive work of the hospital.

With the Servians Dr. Ryan had become a popular hero. To him they gave the credit for saving the city of Belgrade from being pillaged and burned by the Austrian troops. The

London *Times* confirmed this view, saying that it was due to his "fearless, determined intervention that the city was not destroyed and that an even greater number of women and children were not carried off into captivity." He kept on good terms, moreover, with the invaders, who sent him no fewer than 3,000 wounded soldiers in one day for treatment!

XII

CONQUERING THE PLAGUE OF TYPHUS

THE story of how the plague of typhus in Servia was conquered by American scientific knowledge, organization, and energy, the cost of practically the whole undertaking being met by American money, forms one of the most dramatic chapters in the history of modern sanitary science. The disease became epidemic in January, 1915, in the northwestern part of Servia among the Austrian prisoners of war, who were greatly crowded together and who were compelled to live under the most insanitary conditions. As these prisoners were sent and as infected native Servians travelled to other parts of the country, the disease spread rapidly, reaching its height in April, when no fewer than nine thousand new cases a day were reported.

In this emergency the American Red Cross organized a sanitary commission, for the leadership of which Dr. Richard P. Strong, professor of tropical diseases in the Medical School of

Harvard University, was selected. Dr. Strong, who was a graduate of Yale of the class of 1893, had proved, in the Philippines and in Manchuria, his capacity for just this sort of work. The commission was financed by contributions from the Rockefeller Foundation, the American Red Cross, and private sources, chiefly at Harvard and at Yale. The membership consisted of twelve physicians and sanitary experts, who sailed for Naples early in April, Dr. Strong having preceded them by several weeks.

All sorts of supplies were taken, one item in the list being fifty-four tons of sulphur for disinfecting purposes. Later, in May, in response to appeals from Dr. Strong for more assistance, a supplementary force of twenty-five sanitary experts under Dr. Edward Stuart, of Oklahoma, was despatched to Servia, and by July the total American membership of the commission had been increased to forty-three. A great mass of additional supplies was also forwarded, including 125 tons of sulphur and fifteen tons of artesian-well apparatus.

England, France, and Russia were as keenly alive as was America to the danger to all Europe

which lay in the dreaded typhus epidemic and had sent sanitary experts and physicians to Servia. Reaching Nish, Dr. Strong, with the co-operation of the medical men from these countries and of such Servian doctors—more than a hundred native physicians succumbed to the disease before it was conquered—as could be spared for the work, organized an International Health Board, of which he became the medical director. With full authority from the Servian Government to take any measures necessary to stamp out the plague, Dr. Strong divided the country for sanitary purposes into fourteen districts. The French, English, and Russian physicians took charge of seven of these districts; the Americans the remainder.

The methods that modern sanitary science employs when it becomes necessary to save not a community but a whole people from the ravages of a pestilence, are well illustrated by Dr. Strong's report to the American Red Cross:

As typhus is conveyed from man to man by vermin (the bite of the body louse) the bathing and disinfection of very large numbers of

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Doctor Richard P. Strong.

people and immediate disinfection of their clothing in a short period of time was an important problem in combating the disease. For this purpose sanitary trains consisting each of three converted railroad cars were fitted up. One car contained a huge boiler which supplied the steam for disinfection of the clothing. In a second car fifteen shower baths were constructed. A third car was converted into a huge autoclave (disinfector), into which steam could be turned under automatic pressure. In this manner the vermin were immediately destroyed and the clothes thoroughly disinfected.

Large tents were erected beside the railroad sidings on which the cars were placed. The people were marched by the thousands to these tents, their hair was clipped, and a limited number undressed themselves, carried their clothes to the disinfecting car, and then passed to the car containing the shower baths. After a thorough scrubbing with soap and water they were sprayed with petroleum as an extra precaution for destroying the vermin. They then received their disinfected clothing. In many instances in which the clothing was very badly soiled fresh clothing was supplied. Many of these people stated that they had not bathed for ten months or longer. Their faces in some instances betrayed surprise and in others fear when the water touched their bodies.

In the larger cities and in those situated away from the railway, disinfecting and bathing plants were established and separate hours

were arranged for bathing women and men in large numbers.

In many towns the clothes were disinfected by baking them in ovens, either specially constructed for this purpose or those which had been built previously for the baking of bricks or for other purposes. As all the hospitals were infected, it was necessary to systematically disinfect these and the inmates.

As cholera threatened to develop, vaccination against cholera and typhoid fever was made compulsory in Servia, and vaccination trains and parties travelled all over the country for this purpose. Dr. Strong's activity during this campaign was prodigious. Here is a letter in which he describes his experiences one night late in May, while returning, with several companions and a guard, from a visit by horseback and carriage to a hospital in Pech, in Montenegro, the carriages having been sent on ahead of the party:

I forgot to mention that I had an escort of six gendarmes with me because we were passing through a territory which is on the Albanian border, and the Albanians are very unfriendly to the Montenegrins. The gendarme in command begged me not to camp in the open, say-

ing it was very dangerous to do so. However, as I had not slept for twenty-eight hours, I did not feel like going on at that hour of the night and spending it at an infected hotel. We therefore insisted on remaining that night in the open. A camp-fire was started and Mr. Brink made some coffee and fried some bacon. This we ate, together with a tin of salmon and some biscuits.

Our meal had hardly been finished before a curious incident happened. A man, screaming with all his lung-power, came running into our vicinity, chased by an Albanian with a rifle in his hands. This man claimed, as we found out later, that the Albanian was trying to kill him. It seems the Albanian had seen our camp fire and had crossed the border to find out what it meant. We gave him something to eat and he at once became very friendly. By signs he intimated to us we should put the camp fire out and lie down and go to sleep. In fact he several times tried to put the fire out himself, and kept pointing to the Albanian frontier, every once in a while raising his rifle as if about to fire, indicating, we presumed, that we were in danger.

As the rain was now pouring down we decided to go to bed. We had no tents with us, but had the canvas covers for our hammocks. We spread our bedding on the ground and then climbed under the canvas. The rain fell heavily all night long. I was wet through, and found next morning that my pocketbook had been so

badly soaked that my passport which it contained was damaged and that the pigment on the red seal had smeared on the paper. We heard some shooting in the night, but no shots were exchanged. A little before 4 A. M. we crawled out of our beds. It was still raining. We rolled up the water-soaked bedding and left it there on the plain to be sent for and started on our walk to the town of Djakovitza, which we reached about 5.45 o'clock. The commanding officer in the town was scandalized to hear that we had camped in the open on the Albanian border. He said it not only was very unsafe but that no one had done such a thing for many years; that our experience would go down in history. We, however, preferred to take the risk of being shot to sleeping in a typhus-infected hotel.

The battle lasted fully six months before the scourge was finally conquered. Dr. Strong's estimate was that from 135,000 to 150,000 persons died in Servia from the disease. In the end science won. On his return to the United States in the autumn Dr. Strong announced that in the last three weeks of his stay in Servia not a single new case of typhus had been reported.

PART IV

AMERICAN AMBULANCES IN FRANCE

XIII

RICHARD NORTON'S MOTOR-AMBULANCE CORPS

THE foremost figure among the scores of American university men who, in 1914, 1915, and 1916, gave their services to the ambulance corps in France, Belgium, and the Near East, was Richard Norton. Graduated at Harvard in 1892, the son of Professor Charles Eliot Norton, he had become an archæologist of note, and for eight years was director of the American School of Classical Studies at Rome. The Great War summoned him from these scholastic pursuits into active field-work in behalf of humanity; and his response to this summons was immediate. Soon after the war began he went to London and organized the American Volunteer Motor-Ambulance Corps. By October, 1914, ten of his ambulances were at work, at first under the auspices of the British Red Cross and the St. John Ambulance, the drivers being recent graduates of American colleges.

From this modest beginning the number of the ambulances over which Mr. Norton exercised supervision was gradually increased as more funds were forthcoming. Finally it was found to be desirable to associate the corps with the American Red Cross and to place its cars under the direct control of the French Army.

To the young Americans who drove these ambulances Mr. Norton, being their senior by many years, was more like an elder brother than a commanding officer. In his relations with them his principal task was of a double character—to teach them to keep out of unnecessary danger and at the same time to inspire them, by example as well as by precept, with a high courage to run any risk in the performance of a real duty. That he succeeded in this by no means easy task is evident from the feeling of loyalty, devotion, and admiration which all the young men who served under him brought back to America.

An anecdote is told of him which illustrates admirably the manner in which he controlled and tempered the overeager spirits of the

youths under him. One evening, so the story goes, Norton found one of his young ambulance drivers a considerable distance from the headquarters of the section absorbed in watching a French battery near by in action. Taken to task by his chief, the boy admitted frankly that he had been drawn thither by a great curiosity to see the big guns in action.

"Yes," commented Norton, in effect, "that was natural. I've had that feeling myself. But consider, for a moment, the possible consequences. Sooner or later the Germans will find this battery, and a shell may blow you to pieces, or a fragment destroy your eyesight or cause the loss of an arm or a leg. And if that happens the French officials will merely shrug their shoulders and say, 'Another one of those reckless Americans throwing away his life for nothing'; and that will be the end of you.

"On the other hand, if you are wounded while in the performance of duty you will be cited for bravery and may receive the Croix de Guerre; and if you are killed, the French will pay you every honor at their command. Which seems to be the sensible choice to make?"

Put in this dramatic way, the lesson of avoiding unnecessary risk was quickly learned.

From the several letters from Mr. Norton to his brother Eliot in New York, which are printed in Mr. M. A. De Wolfe Howe's volume, "Harvard Volunteers in Europe," it is possible to construct a reasonably complete picture of the important work which Norton was able to do in the early years of the war.

Writing from La Croix, Champagne, under date of October 14, 1915, Norton summarized the work which his corps of ambulances had done during the year:

As it is just a year since the Corps came into being, it is worth remembering what we started from and what we have developed into. Notwithstanding errors of judgment or accidents, we have accomplished good work. A year ago we started from London with our cars, and not much more than hope for a bank balance. We were wanderers searching for work. During this year we have grown into a corps consisting now of some sixty cars, to which the St. John Ambulance and Red Cross Societies render any assistance we ask, and instead of wondering where we were to find occupation *the French authorities have intrusted us with the whole ambulance service of the* 11*th Army corps.*

. . . We have carried during the year just under twenty-eight thousand cases, and during the days from the 25th of September to the 9th of October, our cars relieved the sufferings of over six thousand individuals. . . .

The period referred to in the last sentence was that of the great French drive in Champagne, in which, as we have seen, young Farnsworth, of the Foreign Legion, was killed. Selections from Norton's description in the same letter of the work of his ambulance corps during this battle follow:

For three days before the 25th of September, an incessant cannonade, continued by night and day, showed that the region round Tahure was the one selected for attacking the Germans. It was on the twenty-fourth that we received final orders to move up to the lines, and to station our cars at the field hospitals and the trenches. . . .

Before we actually took up our positions I had been over the ground to get the lay of the land, to see where the various trails—they were scarcely more—led to, in order to know how best to direct the ambulances on their various errands. The country was absolutely packed; I can scarcely find any word to suggest a picture of how packed it was with troops and munition trains. There was every sort and

description. On the rolling land, over which the trenches, cut in through chalk soil, ran like great white snakes, the batteries of every sized gun were innumerable. I cannot tell you how many guns there were, but, in a radius of half a mile from where my ambulances stood the first night, there were at least a dozen batteries of various calibers, and they were no thicker there than anywhere else. We tried to sleep on the stretchers for an hour or two before dawn of the twenty-fifth, but when you have a battery of "150's" coughing uninterruptedly within less than one hundred yards of where you are resting, to say nothing of other guns to right and to left of you, one's repose is decidedly syncopated. On the morning of the twenty-fifth the cannonade slackened, and we knew afterward that the three previous days' work had battered the German lines into a shapeless mass, and that the French infantry had made good the chance they had been patiently waiting for all summer of proving to the world their ability to beat the Germans. . . .

It is curious that only three or four incidents of the twelve hard days' work stand out clearly in my mind. The rest is but a hazy memory of indistinguishable nights and days, cold and rain, long rows of laden stretchers waiting to be put into the cars, wavering lines of less seriously wounded hobbling along to where we were waiting, sleepy hospital orderlies, dark underground chambers in which the doctors were sorting out and caring for the

wounded, and an unceasing noise of rumbling wagons, whirring aeroplanes, distant guns coughing and nearby ones crashing, shells bursting and bullets hissing. Out of this general jumble of memory one feature shines out steadily clear; it is of the doctors. Patient, indefatigable, tender, encouraging and brave in the most perfect way, they were everywhere in the forefront and seemingly knew not what fatigue meant. . . .

After describing a few of the incidents that impressed themselves upon his memory, Mr. Norton continued:

Still another picture that rises in my mind, as I write, is of one cloudy morning, when, after a very tiring night, I was sitting on the roadside watching a rather heavy bombardment near by, and suddenly through the din rose the sweet clear notes of a shepherd's pipe. It was the same reed-pipe I have heard so often on the hills of Greece and Asia Minor, and the same sweetly-sad, age-old shepherd music telling of Pan and the Nymphs, and the asphodel meadows where Youth lies buried. The piper was an ordinary *piou-piou*, a simple fantasin, *mon vieux Charles*, with knapsack on back, rifle slung over his shoulder and helmet on head strolling down to the valley of death a few hundred yards beyond. Nor is this the only music I have heard. One night a violin sounded

among the pines which shelter our tents, and I strolled over to find a blue-clad Orpheus easing the pain of the wounded and numbing the fatigue of the *brancardiers* with bits of Chopin and Schubert and Beethoven.

Such are some of the impressions of the battle seen from this side of the line. Others I have formed since the main fight ceased, in the lines previously held by the Germans. I went over some of their trenches the other day and have never seen anything so horrible. Although, as prisoners have told us, they knew they were to be attacked, they had no idea that the attack would be anything like so severe as it was. Those I have talked to said it was awful, and that they were glad to be out of it. Their trenches were very elaborately constructed, many of the dugouts being fitted up with considerable furniture, the dwellers evidently having no notion they would be hurriedly evicted. After the bombardment there was nothing left of all this careful work. The whole earth was torn to pieces. It looked as though some drunken giant had driven his giant plough over the land. In the midst of an utterly indescribable medley of torn wire, broken wagons, and upheaved timbers, yawned here and there chasms like the craters of small volcanoes, where mines had been exploded. It was an ashen gray world, distorted with the spasms of death—like a scene in the moon. Except for the broken guns, the scattered clothing, the hasty graves, the dead horses and

other signs of human passage, no one could have believed that such a place had ever been anything but dead and desolate. The rubbish still remained when I was there, but masses of material had been already gathered up and saved.

Mr. Norton gave the text of the notice issued to the army on October 1, describing the vast quantities of material captured in this battle, and added this evidence that six years before the present war began the Germans had decided to use gas in warfare:

In this notice no mention is made of some very interesting gas machines that were taken. They were of two sorts, one for the production of gas, the other to counteract its effects. The latter were rather elaborate and heavy but very effective instruments consisting of two main parts; one to slip over the head, protecting the eyes and clipping the nose, the other an arrangement of bags and bottles containing oxygen, which the wearer inhaled through a tube held in the mouth. There were several forms of these apparatuses, but the most interesting point to note about them is that one had stamped upon it the words: "Type of 1914—developed from type of 1912, developed from type of 1908," thus showing that seven years ago the Germans had decided to fight with gas.

Eight months later Norton and his corps were at Verdun, the scene of the great but unsuccessful offensive of the army of the Crown Prince of Germany in the spring of that year, 1916. Another letter from him to his brother Eliot, reprinted in "Harvard Volunteers in Europe" from the Springfield *Republican* of July 8, 1916, shows the perils of the work in which he and his men were then engaged, and the spirit in which they faced these perils. The letter was dated Verdun, June 15, 1916:

It is some time since I wrote, but we first were moving up here, and since arriving have had strenuous times. We are camped some five miles outside Verdun, where we have our permanent post; another is at a hospital between us and Verdun; while every night, as soon as it is dark, we send out eight cars to evacuate the advanced posts. This is extremely risky work and can only be done at night, owing to the road being in view of the Germans, who are not a kilometre distant. At night I have my office, as it were, at Verdun, where L'hoste has his main post. Thence, as there is need, he and I go up and down the line of posts to keep the work moving.

The advanced posts can be reached only at night, so, as there are only four hours of dark-

ness, we are extremely busy. Two days ago we were ordered to evacuate one of these posts by day—a thing heretofore unheard of. Of course, I obeyed and sent the five cars demanded, following them up a short time afterward. I arrived at the starting point to find the first car had been steadily shelled as it went along the road, that the second, containing Jack Wendell and a chauffeur named Hollinshed, had not returned from the trip, and that another car had gone to see what the trouble was.

I started at once to go after the missing cars, but at that moment Hoskier, who had gone after Wendell, came hurrying round the corner. He told me that both Wendell and Hollinshed had been wounded, but not seriously, as they were putting some wounded in their car; that they were being cared for at the *poste;* that they begged me not to come up till dark; that the authorities at the *poste* begged us to keep away for fear the *poste* would be shelled, and, lastly, he said it was obvious the Boches were laying for us, for they were shelling our road steadily.

This was obviously the right thing to do, but Lawrence MacCreery at once asked to be allowed to go by the *boyau* with his chauffeur; they would reach the *poste* as dark fell and would bring Wendell and Hollinshed out on their car if that had not been destroyed. This they very pluckily did. I, meanwhile, had to report to the authorities, and got back just as Wendell and Hollinshed had been fixed up by

the doctors. Wendell has a slight wound in the back, Hollinshed a rather more severe one in the shoulder. They behaved in a way to give cause to their families to be extremely proud of them, absolutely refusing to return with Hoskier, but insisting on his taking the four bad cases they had gone to get. They will both be given the Croix de Guerre, and they well deserve it.

Since then we have had one car blown to pieces and five others hit. Our Verdun post is shelled every evening, and one of the others was heavily peppered last night. The division has suffered heavily, and I do not think can stay more than a few days more. We can't either, if we go on losing men and cars at this rate.

Till to-day it has rained steadily, which has added to our difficulties. However, we are sticking to it and I think will pull off the work all right.

The officials of the French Army showed a high appreciation of the value of Mr. Norton's services. Early in the war he received the Croix de Guerre, the *Journal Officiel*, in the announcement signed by General Pétain, the commander of the 2d Army, referring to his services as follows:

He gave proof of the greatest devotion and finest courage, by himself driving his cars day

and night, through dangerous zones and by giving to all his section an example of endurance carried to the point of complete exhaustion of his strength.

After the work of Mr. Norton's corps at Verdun was completed, the members as a body were cited in the army orders of the day for their bravery and devotion in caring for the wounded. "Il n'est plus un seul de ses membres," concluded the citation, "qui ne soit un modèle de sang-froid et d'abnégation. Plusieurs d'entre eux ont été blessés." Finally in the spring of 1917 the Cross of the Legion of Honor, the highest decoration to be won in France by a foreigner, was presented to Mr. Norton.

When the United States entered the war Mr. Norton had charge of more than a hundred ambulances on the western battle-front, and was arranging for two additional sections of forty men each. He was urged to accept a commission as major in the United States Army and to continue in control of the ambulance corps which he had created and which he had managed with untiring devotion and with admirable results for two and a half years. He de-

clined the offer, however, and in September, 1917, retired from the service. Early in August, 1918, he died suddenly in Paris of meningitis.

XIV

THE WORK OF MR. ANDREW'S CORPS

ENTIRELY distinct from the Motor-Ambulance Corps, of which Richard Norton was the chief, was the Field Service of the American Ambulance, of which A. Piatt Andrew was the Inspector-General. Mr. Andrew was one of the contingent of American volunteers who arrived in Paris early in 1915. He was a man of experience and culture. After being graduated at Princeton in 1893 he had studied in Germany and in Paris, and from 1900 to 1909 he was an instructor and assistant professor of economics at Harvard. For the two following years he was Assistant Secretary of the United States Treasury.

To the energy and administrative skill of Mr. Andrew were mainly due the organization and development of the Field Service of the American Ambulance in France, the full story of which, told in detail by the men themselves who formed the corps, is to be found in "Friends

of France." In recognition of his services to France, Mr. Andrew, early in 1917, received the Cross of the Legion of Honor, he and Mr. Norton being the only two Americans engaged in ambulance work upon whom this distinction had been conferred up to that time.

By the spring of 1915 a sufficient number of cars and drivers had been assembled in Paris to justify the request that the French authorities give the American Ambulance a place at the front. The request was complied with, and by the end of April three sections, each comprising about twenty American cars, and all with American volunteer drivers, were in operation, one stationed at Dunkirk, another in Lorraine and a third in the Vosges.

From these small beginnings the Field Service of the American Ambulance developed rapidly, until nearly two years later, in January, 1917, only a short time before the United States entered the war, Mr. Andrew, summarizing the work done, could write as follows to the *Princeton Alumni Weekly:*

We have already more than 200 cars driven by American volunteers, mostly university men,

grouped in sections which are attached to divisions of the French army. These sections have served at the front in Flanders, on the Somme, on the Aisne, in Champagne, at Verdun (five sections, including 120 cars at the height of the battle), in Lorraine and in reconquered Alsace, and one of our veteran sections has received the signal tribute from the French army staff of being attached to the French Army of the Orient in the Balkans. We are now on the point of enlarging our service for the last lap of the war, and a considerable number of new places are available.

Every American has reason to be proud of the chapter which these few hundred American youths have written into the history of this prodigious period. Each of the several sections of the American Ambulance Field Service as a whole and fifty-four of their individual members have been decorated by the French army with the Croix de Guerre or the Médaille Militaire for valor in the performance of their work.

It was obvious that young college men formed the most available class for this service, which called for leisure and certain financial resources, in addition to initiative and intelligence. A knowledge of the mechanics of a motor-car and the ability to speak French were of course additional and valuable assets. Mr. Norton even considered it essential that his men should

know some French. In a letter to the secretary and treasurer of his corps in London, Mr. H. D. Morrison, he wrote:

> Many of the writers whose letters I have sent you express a delightful confidence that they can learn enough of the vernacular on their voyage out to render their service effective. It is a shame to dash cold water on such pleasing beliefs, but the fact is they are hopelessly wrong. They are like the man who, when asked if he played the violin, replied "I don't know; I have never tried." Still the general spirit of the letters is fine.

The young college men of the country made a splendid response to Mr. Andrew's appeals. As given in the list at the end of "Friends of France," the members of the American Ambulance who had been in the Field Service down to October, 1916, numbered 349. Of this number 264 men were representatives of forty-eight American universities, colleges and schools, and of two foreign universities, Paris and Cambridge. Of these 264 men there were 89 from Harvard, 31 from Princeton, 30 from Yale, 11 from Dartmouth, 8 from the University of Pennsylvania, 7 from Columbia, 6 from the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 5 from Amherst, and from 1 to 4 from dozens of other institutions, from the University of California in the West to Bowdoin in the East. Eighteen of these men were American Rhodes Scholars from Oxford. The non-college men in the group, eighty-five in number, were, almost without an exception, of the same high spirit and of the same fine type as their fellows.

The duties which all the men in the Field Service of the American Ambulance were required to perform involved hardships, deprivations, and often great dangers. Three of them were killed in service—Richard N. Hall, of Ann Arbor, Mich., Henry M. Suckley, of Rhinebeck, N. Y., and Edward J. Kelley, of Philadelphia. Many of them were wounded, two so severely and under such circumstances as to win for them the most coveted decoration that the French Army has to bestow, the Médaille Militaire, which carried with it the Croix de Guerre avec Palme. They were William M. Barber, of Toledo, Ohio, and Roswell S. Sanders, of Newburyport, Mass.

XV

THE DEATH OF RICHARD HALL

THE first section of the American ambulance to reach the front in April, 1915, had its headquarters at the beginning at the town of Saint-Maurice, on the headwaters of the Moselle, about fifteen miles north of Belfort, near the Swiss frontier. At first numbering only ten ambulances, the section was soon increased to twenty, when it was found that the light but strong American cars could replace the mules and farm-wagons which up to that time had been used to transport the wounded over the mountain roads, with their heavy grades, from the dressing-stations behind the firing-lines to the hospitals. Later the headquarters of the section were moved nearer the firing-lines to Moosch, in the valley of the river Thur, which, flowing in a southeasterly direction, emptied into the Rhine. From the mountain heights the front-line French trenches overlooked the

broad Rhine valley to the east, Mulhausen and Colmar being within full view. The ten miles or so between Saint-Maurice and the valley of the Thur included the watershed between the Moselle and the Rhine and the boundary-line between France and Germany.

One of the most popular men in this Alsace section was Richard N. Hall, of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Immediately after being graduated at Dartmouth in June, 1915, Hall had gone to France and had joined the American Ambulance Field Service, becoming a member of the third section in Alsace. Under the title "Christmas Eve, 1915," Waldo Peirce, of Bangor, Maine, in "Friends of France," described the circumstances under which Hall met his death, and indicated the affection in which he was held by his mates:

All this time, as in all the past months, Richard Nelville Hall calmly drove his car up the winding, shell-swept artery of the mountain of war,—past crazed mules, broken-down artillery carts, swearing drivers, stricken horses, wounded stragglers still able to hobble,—past long convoys of Boche prisoners, silent, descending in twos, guarded by a handful of men,—

past all the personnel of war, great and small (for there is but one road, one road on which to travel, one road for the enemy to shell),—past *abris*, bomb-proofs, subterranean huts, to arrive at the *postes de secours*, where silent men moved mysteriously in the mist under the great trees, where the cars were loaded with an ever-ready supply of still more quiet figures (though some made sounds), mere bundles in blankets.

Hall saw to it that those quiet bundles were carefully and rapidly installed,—right side up, for instance,—for it is dark and the *brancardiers* are dull folks, deadened by the dead they carry; then rolled down into the valley below, where little towns bear stolidly their daily burden of shells wantonly thrown from somewhere in Bocheland over the mountain to somewhere in France—the bleeding bodies in the car a mere corpuscle in the full crimson stream, the ever-rolling tide from the trenches to the hospital, of the blood of life and the blood of death.

Once there, his wounded unloaded, Dick Hall filled his gasolene tank and calmly rolled again on his way. Two of his comrades had been wounded the day before, but Dick Hall never faltered. He slept where and when he could, in his car, at the *poste*, on the floor of our temporary kitchen at Moosch—dry blankets—wet blankets—blankets of mud—blankets of blood; contagion was pedantry—microbes a myth.

At midnight Christmas Eve, he left the valley to get his load of wounded for the last time.

Richard Hall.

Alone, ahead of him, two hours of lonely driving up the mountain. Perhaps he was thinking of other Christmas Eves, perhaps of his distant home, and of those who were thinking of him.

. . . . . .

Matter, the next American to pass, found him by the roadside halfway up the mountain. His face was calm and his hands still in position to grasp the wheel. Matter, and Jennings, who came a little later, bore him tenderly back in Matter's car to Moosch, where his brother, Louis Hall, learned what had happened.

A shell had struck his car and killed him instantly, painlessly. A chance shell in a thousand had struck him at his post, in the morning of his youth.

The body of Richard Hall was buried with all the honors of war in the valley of Saint-Amarin, his grave being next to that of a French officer who fell the same morning. At the end of the service Hall's citation was read and the Croix de Guerre was pinned to his coffin. A translation of the latter half of the address of the surgeon-in-chief of the 66th Division, Dr. Georges, follows:

Barely graduated from Dartmouth College, in the noble enthusiasms of his youth he brought to France the invaluable coöperation of his

charitable heart—coming hither to gather up on the battlefields of Alsace those of our gallant troops who were wounded fighting for their beloved country.

He died like a "Chevalier de la Bienfaisance," like an American, while engaged in a work of kindness and Christian charity!

To the dear ones whom he has left in his own land, in Michigan, to his grief-stricken parents, to his older brother who displays here among us such stoicism in his grief, our respect and our expressions of sorrow are most sincere and heartfelt.

Driver Richard Hall, you are to be laid to rest here, in the shadow of the tri-colored flag, beside all these brave fellows, whose gallantry you have emulated. You are justly entitled to make one of their consecrated battalion! Your body alone, gloriously mutilated, disappears; your soul has ascended to God; your memory remains in our hearts—imperishable!—Frenchmen do not forget!

Driver Richard Hall—farewell!

XVI

AROUND BOIS-LE-PRÊTRE, THE "FOREST OF DEATH"

PONT-À-MOUSSON, which became the headquarters for ten months of Section 2 of the Field Service of the American Ambulance, is near the Lorraine border, at the apex of a triangle at the base of which are Nancy and Toul. It is on the Moselle River, and lies only a dozen or so miles east of Seicheprey, where the American soldiers first came in conflict with the Germans. The section consisted of twenty cars, and the Americans in charge of them numbered twenty-four, under the leadership of Edward Van D., or, as he was more commonly called, Ned, Salisbury, of Chicago. Constant and violent fighting in the near-by region in and around Bois-le-Prêtre, the "Forest of Death," the Germans called it, kept the section busy during the summer of 1915, Pont-à-Mousson and the neighboring towns and villages being frequently

under shell-fire. The section began its work in April, at first under the direction of French orderlies. The Americans, however, were so quick to learn, and adapted themselves to their new duties so readily, that in a short time the French section was transferred to another post and the Americans were left in sole charge of the work.

Two of the members of this section have left a full record of its personnel and of its daily activities—James R. McConnell, of Carthage, North Carolina, and Leslie Buswell, of Gloucester, Massachusetts. McConnell's narrative was printed in the *Outlook* for September, 1915, with an introduction by Colonel Roosevelt; and the paper was so full of information and was written with such vividness, freshness and humor, that it deserved all the praise it received. The article was reprinted in "Friends of France." Here is McConnell's picture of the scene when the shelling was active:

It was a day when the shelling seemed to be general, for shrapnel and small 77 shells were also bursting at intervals over and in a little town one passes through in order to avoid a

more heavily bombarded outer route on the way to the *postes de secours.* It was magnificent descending the hill from the *postes* that afternoon. To the left French 75 shells were in rapid action; and one could see the explosion of the German shells just over the crest of the long ridge where the batteries were firing. It was a clear, sparkling day, and against the vivid green of the hills, across the winding river, the little white puffs of shrapnel exploding over the road below were in perfect relief, while from the red-tiled roofs of the town, nestling in the valley below, tall columns of black smoke spurted up where the large shells struck. Little groups of soldiers, the color of whose uniforms added greatly to the picture, were crowded against the low stone walls lining the road to observe the firing; and one sensed the action and felt the real excitement of the sort of war one imagines instead of the uninteresting horror of the cave-dweller combats that are the rule in this war.

In contrast with the foregoing is McConnell's description of the night-work of the American ambulance drivers:

The work at night is quite eerie, and on moonless nights quite difficult. No lights are allowed, and the inky black way ahead seems packed with a discordant jumble of sounds as the never-ending artillery and *ravitaillement*

trains rattle along. One creeps past convoy after convoy, past sentinels who cry, "*Halte là!*" and then whisper an apologetic "*Passez*" when they make out the ambulance; and it is only in the dazzling light of the illuminating rockets that shoot into the air and sink slowly over the trenches that one can see to proceed with any speed.

It is at night, too, that our hardest work comes, for that is usually the time when attacks and counter-attacks are made and great numbers of men are wounded. Sometimes all twenty of the Section cars will be in service. It is then that one sees the most frightfully wounded: the men with legs and arms shot away, mangled faces, and hideous body wounds. It is a time when men die in the ambulances before they reach the hospitals, and I believe nearly every driver in the Section has had at least one distressing experience of that sort.

Through all the excitement, however, these young Americans preserved their characteristic traits. Thus McConnell notes:

No matter how long the war lasts, I do not believe that the members of Section Y will lose any of their native ways, attitudes, or tastes. They will remain just as American as ever. Why, they still fight for a can of American tobacco or a box of cigarettes that comes from the States, when such a rare and appreciated

article does turn up, and papers and magazines from home are sure to go the rounds, finding themselves at length in the hands of English-reading soldiers in the trenches. I never could understand the intense grip that the game of baseball seems to possess, but it holds to some members of the Section with a cruel pertinacity. One very dark night, a few days ago, two of us were waiting at an advanced *poste de secours*. The rifle and artillery fire was constant, illuminating rockets shot into the air, and now and then one could distinguish the heavy dull roar of a mine or *torpille* detonating in the trenches. War in all its engrossing detail was very close. Suddenly my friend turned to me and, with a sigh, remarked, "Gee! I wish I knew how the Red Sox were making out!"

Thursday, the 22d of July, 1915, was a memorable day for the Americans in Pont-à-Mousson. The town was heavily shelled, and it was only by the narrowest margin that some of them were not killed. As it was, they lost their faithful orderly and general servant, Mignot, to whom they were all greatly attached.

A graphic narrative of the occurrences of that day is to be found in one of the letters that make up the book called "Ambulance No. 10," by Leslie Buswell, of Gloucester, Massachusetts,

a member of the section. Under date of Pont-à-Mousson, July 24, 1915, Buswell wrote:

. . . We got back to lunch about 12 o'clock, and Mignot, our indefatigable friend in the position of a general servant, upbraided us for our unpunctuality, etc.

We had hardly finished lunch when a shell burst some twenty metres away and we hurriedly took to the cellar, while eleven more shells exploded all around our headquarters, or "caserne," as we call it. We then went for a round of inspection and found that the twelve shells had all fallen on our side of the road and were all within forty or fifty metres of us. This made us feel pretty sure that the shells were meant for us or for our motors. Schroder* and I discussed the matter, and came to the conclusion that we did not like the situation very much, and that if the Germans sent perhaps six shells, all at once, we should many of us get caught. I was very tired, and at about one-thirty went to sleep and slept until five-thirty, when I went to dinner at the caserne.

The evening meal over, an argument started about the merits of a periodical called *Le Mot* (do you know it?)—a kind of futurist paper. After a rapid-fire commentary from one and then another of us, which continued until about eight-thirty, Schroder and I decided to go to our rooms to bed. We were walking

* Bernard N. P. Schroder, the only representative in the American Ambulance Field Service of Northwestern University.

home when I reminded him that he had been asked to tell four of our fellows who slept in a house near by to be sure that no light could be seen through the shutters; so turning back we rapped on the window and heard merry laughter and were greeted with a cheery invitation to join the nine who had gathered inside. It seems that one of them, who had been on duty at Montauville, had managed to get some fresh bread and butter and jam, and they were celebrating the event! We had to decline their friendly hospitality, however, as we wanted to get some sleep.

I had just got my boots off when—*whish-sh-sh-bang! bang! bang! bang!*—four huge shells burst a little way down the road towards our caserne. Thirty seconds after came two more—five minutes later six more—and then we heard a screaming woman ejaculating hysterically "C'est les Américains." Schroder and I looked at each other without speaking. We hurriedly dressed and started to run to the caserne—women and soldiers shouting to us to stay where we were; but rushing on through the fog, smoke and dust, we reached headquarters. There we found the rest of the Section in the cellar, and hurriedly going over those present, realized that two were absent—Mignot and the mechanic of the French officer attached to us.

Mignot, it was found, had been killed by one of the shells; also two women, while several

others, including the mechanic, were badly wounded. The narrative continues:

Ogilvie* got his car and we got our stretchers out to take away the blessés. There were a few of us grouped about some seven or eight —and near—with the wounded just put on stretchers, when—"Look out!" *Bang! Bang! Bang!*—three more shells.

We had already thrown ourselves on the ground, and then, finding we were still alive, feverishly loaded the car. "Good God! I've stalled it," said the driver—then the cranking—would it never start—try again—thank Heaven, it was off! Hardly thirty seconds after, *whish-sh-bang! bang!* two more came. We retired to a cellar for a few minutes, as the three dead could stay there while it was so terribly dangerous. At last we emerged and were about to lift Mignot's body when both arms moved. Was he alive, after all? No, it was only the electric wires he was lying on that had stimulated his muscles. The car turned the corner with the three dead, and we ran back to the caserne.

There we found the rest of our Section very shaken indeed. A shell had burst just outside of the house where the nine were making merry and the violence of the impact had hurled all of them to the ground. Two feet nearer and the whole lot would have been killed.

* Francis D. Ogilvie, of Lindfield, Sussex, England.

As a result of this bombardment and of an attack by the Germans on the town, the headquarters of Section 2 were moved the next day to Dieulouard, five or six miles to the south of Pont-à-Mousson.

XVII

IN THE GREAT BATTLE FOR VERDUN

WHEN in February, 1916, the German army of the Crown Prince began its attack upon the French troops protecting Verdun, the men composing Section 2 of the American Ambulance were hastily transferred from the neighborhood of Pont-à-Mousson to Verdun. In the previous month Section 3 had been moved from its station in Alsace to the Lorraine front, and the men of this section were also at Verdun. The need of more ambulances finally became so great that two additional American sections were sent to the neighborhood of Verdun.

Frank Hoyt Gailor, of Memphis, Tennessee, a member of Section 2, contributed to the *Cornhill Magazine* for July, 1916, a vivid description of the journey of the section to a village near Verdun, by way of Bar-le-Duc. From this paper as it appears in full in "Friends of France," a few paragraphs may be quoted:

We started from Bar-le-Duc about noon [on February 22, 1916], and it took us six hours

to make forty miles through roads covered with snow, swarming with troops, and all but blocked by convoys of food carts and sections of trucks. Of course, we knew that there was an attack in the neighborhood of Verdun, but we did not know who was making it or how it was going. Then about four o'clock in the short winter twilight we passed two or three regiments of French colonial troops on the march with all their field equipment. I knew who and what they were by the curious Eastern smell that I had always before associated with camels and circuses. They were lined up on each side of the road around their soup kitchens, which were smoking busily, and I had a good look at them as we drove along.

It was the first time I had seen an African army in the field, and though they had had a long march, they were cheerful and in high spirits at the prospect of battle. They were all young, active men, and of all colors and complexions, from blue-eyed blonds to shiny blacks. They all wore khaki and brown shrapnel casques bearing the trumpet insignia of the French sharpshooter. We were greeted with laughter and chaff, for the most part, in an unknown chatter, but now and again some one would say, "Hee, hee, Ambulance Américaine," or "Yes, Ingliish, good-bye." . . .

At about six in the evening we reached our destination some forty miles northeast of Bar-le-Duc. The little village where we stopped had been a railroad centre until the day before,

when the Germans started bombarding it. Now the town was evacuated, and the smoking station deserted. The place had ceased to exist, except for a hospital which was established on the southern edge of the town in a lovely old château, overlooking the Meuse. We were called up to the hospital as soon as we arrived to take such wounded as could be moved to the nearest available rail-head, which was ten miles away, on the main road, and four miles south of Verdun. We started out in convoy, but with the then conditions of traffic, it was impossible to stick together, and it took some of us till five o'clock the next morning to make the trip. That was the beginning of the attack for us, and the work of "evacuating" the wounded to the railway stations went steadily on until March 15. It was left to the driver to decide how many trips it was physically possible for him to make in each twenty-four hours. There were more wounded than could be carried, and no one could be certain of keeping any kind of schedule with the roads as they then were.

Sometimes we spent five or six hours waiting at a cross-road, while columns of troops and their equipment filed steadily by. Sometimes at night we could make a trip in two hours that had taken us ten in daylight. Sometimes, too, we crawled slowly to a station only to find it deserted, shells falling, and the hospital moved to some still more distant point of the line. Situations and conditions changed

from day to day—almost from hour to hour. One day it was sunshine and spring, with roads six inches deep in mud, no traffic, and nothing to remind one of war, except the wounded in the car and the distant roar of the guns, which sounded like a giant beating a carpet. The next day it was winter again, with mud turned to ice, the roads blocked with troops, and the Germans turning hell loose with their heavy guns.

XVIII

WILLIAM BARBER'S MÉDAILLE MILITAIRE

BEGINNING on February 21, 1916, the battle for Verdun, with the repeated German attacks and the French counter-attacks, lasted for weeks and even months. One of the most thrilling experiences of the American Ambulance drivers was that of William Barber, of Toledo, Ohio, who was the only representative of Oberlin in the section which had come to Verdun from Alsace. The story begins with the following selections from the letter of a Harvard ambulance driver to his uncle, which was printed anonymously in the *Red Cross Magazine* for October, 1916. Accompanying the letter, which was in the form of a diary—vivid memoranda of incidents during six successive June nights—was an injunction "not to let dad know about this, for it would worry him." Here is the writer's description of one night's experience:

Fourth Night: Filled up gas and oil and off again: headquarters changed into Verdun be-

cause of bombardment of suburb. Black as pitch and heavy rain. Heavy traffic of all kinds on road. Terrible driving. Heavy firing; dead horses and smashed wagons, etc., strewed all along. O. K. to post. On way back met great tangle in road: six horses killed in one spot; dead and wounded men and busted wagons all mixed up in middle of road. Got out; was in act of cutting dead horses' traces with knife; "bang" without warning and another in the same spot. Thrown down among the tangle; face in a pool of horses' gore; showered with rocks and stuff of every kind. Sharp pain in shoulder. Thought had got one; turned out to be only a bruise. Another man in back of me same; more wounded, groaning all around; don't know how many dead; could not hear for two hours, and still have ringing in my ears. Saw there was nothing to do but wait until firing was over. Ran back in ditch in side of road and got behind tree and big rock. More came, but I was O. K. . . . Let up for a minute; ran through debris to stop other cars coming in opposite direction. Met two just on other side; dove under car; shell went off pretty near. Some one jumped off car and followed me; it was Paul. We stayed there a couple of minutes and talked; will never forget it.

He got back to headquarters safely, running at high speed, "low not working," with two shrapnel dents in his helmet and many scars

on his car. The next night he rescued a wounded comrade, young Barber, as thus narrated:

Fifth Night.—Got to post O. K. Heavy traffic; firing; road stinking of dead flesh. On way back heard forlorn cry of Barber. Stopped and found him in arms of Frenchman by side of road. Nerves gone so he couldn't talk straight. Car had been hit; he was wounded; pumping hell out of road ahead where his car was. He had crawled back; was afraid to let him wait. Dragged him into front alongside of me and made a dash; never drove so fast in all my life. Passed his car; whole back shot off and wheels gone. Got to last bridge and found artillery coming across in opposite direction. Crawled across one side on remains of a railroad track. Grabbed leading horses of a battery by bridle, and jammed them over on one side of road, commanding riders to wait; must have thought I was an officer; because they did; hurried back and drove across. Got to headquarters O. K. and got Barber into dressing room. Worst wound was on his back, but a glancing one. He will pull through.

The sequel to this drama, which came so near having a tragic ending, is to be found in the following selections from a letter dated June 30, which Barber wrote from the hospital

to his family and which is printed entire in "Friends of France":

Four nights ago I had a pretty narrow escape. I can mention no names here, but this is the gist of the story:—

I was driving my car with three wounded soldiers in it along a road that was being shelled. Well, I got in the midst of a pretty hot shower, so I stopped my car and got under it. A few minutes later I supposed it was blowing over, so I got out. I had no sooner done so than I heard one of those big *obus* coming, the loudest I had ever heard. I ran to the front of my car, crouching down in front of the radiator. When it burst it struck the car. My three soldiers were killed. I was hurt only a little. I am not disfigured in any way. It just tore my side and legs a bit.

The French treated me wonderfully. I succeeded in getting the next American Ambulance driven by Wheeler (a great boy) who took me to the City of —— where our *poste* is. Here I was given first aid, and the *Médecin chef* personally conducted me in an American Ambulance, in the middle of the night, to a very good hospital. They say I have the best doctor in France—in Paris.

Well, I woke up the next day in a bed, and have been recuperating ever since. Every one is wonderful to me. General Pétain, second to Joffre, has stopped in to shake hands with me, and many are my congratulations, too, for above

my bed hangs the *Médaille Militaire*, the greatest honor the French can give any one. Really, I am proud, although I don't deserve it any more than the rest. Please excuse my egotism.

This letter identifies the rescuer of Barber as Walter H. Wheeler, of Yonkers, N. Y., who had been with Barber in Alsace before coming to Verdun. After he had turned Barber over to the medical men, Wheeler was sent back to get the wounded from Barber's car. But he found that the same shell that had wrecked the car and had injured Barber had killed the three wounded soldiers who were in the car.

For their courageous work through these dreadful nights the entire section received an army citation and as a body the Croix de Guerre. Wheeler and three of his companions received individual citations and each the Croix de Guerre. The Médaille Militaire which was awarded to Barber carried with it the Croix de Guerre avec Palme. The only other driver in the American Ambulance Field Service upon whom the Médaille Militaire had been bestowed, up to November, 1916, was Roswell S. Sanders, of Newburyport, Mass.

XIX

TWO YALE MEN AT VERDUN

AMONG the Americans who won distinction by their devotion to their difficult and dangerous duties as drivers of ambulances at Verdun were several Yale men, brief records of whom are available. Elmore McNeill Bostwick, of St. Louis, having completed his year's work at college by Christmas, 1915, sailed for France, and with a classmate, George K. Haupt, of Buffalo, became an ambulance driver in what was called the "Formation Harjes," to which was awarded the Croix de Guerre for its services at Verdun. Here is a paragraph from a letter from Bostwick, which appeared in the *Yale Alumni Weekly*, describing his sensations during an enemy attack from the air:

After breakfast, just before we started out, I was treated to my first air attack. Eight German aeroplanes came over the town and attempted to destroy the military headquarters. As we were right next door to them, it was rather disturbing. An air attack is the most

nerve racking thing in the world. You see these little things, looking for all the world like hornets, apparently exactly over your head. You hear a whistling sound, lie on the ground flat on your face and wait for the explosion which comes about three seconds after you first hear the bomb coming. I can tell you you do a lot of thinking in those three seconds, and each time you feel as though the bomb was going to hit you right in the small of the back. They dropped sixteen bombs that morning, but no one was hurt, though one dropped within fifty feet of where I was lying.

This reference to the "Formation Harjes" calls for a word of explanation. The first lot of ambulances which the American Red Cross sent abroad consisted of seventeen Ford cars, the cost of which was met by contributions from students at Yale and Harvard, twelve being the gift of Yale and five of Harvard. Writing in the spring of 1916 of the work which these cars had accomplished, Mr. H. Herman Harjes, president of the American Relief Clearing House in Paris and the official representative for France of the American Red Cross, said:

The original American Red Cross ambulance unit is doing very good and satisfactory work

in every respect. It has transported up to date about 16,000 wounded. All the men are very devoted and full of energy, and the service they are rendering is much appreciated.

The French authorities having expressed a desire that the general control of all the American ambulances and drivers be placed in the hands of the American Red Cross, the arrangement was made, the cars remaining, of course, under the immediate direction of the French army officers for service at the front. Mr. Harjes, in the same letter to the American Red Cross, explained the transfer under this arrangement, of Mr. Norton's Motor Ambulance Corps, as follows:

A unit known as the "American Volunteer Motor Ambulance Corps," having Mr. Richard Norton at its head, has now come under the American Red Cross. His section was, up to quite recently, under the British Red Cross, and has been doing excellent work. . . . All the volunteer American work in the field has been really splendidly done and is extremely appreciated by everybody.

The following paragraph from a letter from W. P. Clyde, Jr., of the Yale class of 1901,

which also appeared in the *Yale Alumni Weekly*, gives a glimpse of the spirit which these American volunteers brought to their arduous and often perilous work:

Under these conditions your eyes smart and your throat becomes dry from dust, the fumes and the strain. The air at night on roads near the front is heavy with the smell of burnt powder and also that other odor with which all Verdun reeks—of the dead hastily buried, or left as they died, or burned beneath the fallen walls and ruins. We carried wounded, we carried those gone mad from shell-shock, we carried the dying, even the dead. Among the thousands of wounded in our cars were some Germans, and they received from us and in the French dressing stations and field hospitals the same care as the others. For the Allies do not hate the poor, half-starved, bullied, and driven German Yokels who now compose the bulk of the German soldiery. Even we whose work is a work of mercy have come to have the greatest hatred for the Heads of the Huns and all that Hundom stands for; besides helping the wounded it is a great satisfaction to every member of our corps to feel that, as perfectly good Americans, we are doing more than just "watching and waiting" by helping the Allies defeat for all time the attempt of the Hun to enslave the world.

XX

HENRY SUCKLEY KILLED BY A BOMB

BY some odd decree of chance an unusual number of Harvard men found themselves in the Vosges section of the American Ambulance Field Service; and as one form of diversion it amused these young men to call themselves the Harvard Club of Alsace Reconquise. The club came into being on the night before the Harvard-Yale football game in November, 1915, and its official life seems to have ended when the health of the Harvard team was drunk after the result of the game was known.

First and last there were twenty-five Harvard men in the membership list of this "club." One of them was Henry M. Suckley, of the class of 1910. Hailing from Rhinebeck, N. Y., Suckley had joined the American Ambulance Field Service in February, 1915, and by good work had become an assistant to his classmate, Lovering Hill, when in July, 1915, Hill succeeded Richard Lawrence as the commander of

Section 3. By his coolness and courage in carrying the wounded over the shell-swept roads in the Vosges he had won his Croix de Guerre, and he was destined to receive, on the eve of his death, even greater honors.

In the autumn of 1916 he returned to the United States for the purpose of recruiting a new ambulance section. He succeeded in securing from his friends in the New York Stock Exchange sufficient funds to purchase and equip twenty motor-ambulances, and with these he returned to France. Meanwhile his old chief, Lovering Hill, had been sent at the head of Section 3 to Saloniki to serve with the French Army in the Orient, the section containing eleven Harvard men, three men from Yale and Princeton respectively, and one each from the universities of Pennsylvania and Virginia.

The work of this section around Saloniki gave such satisfaction that General Sarrail asked for another; and the cars which Suckley had procured and which were unofficially known as the New York Stock Exchange Unit were formed into Section 10, and under his leadership were sent to Saloniki.

In the following March [1917] Suckley was killed at a camp near Saloniki by the explosion of a bomb dropped by a German aviator. Two others were killed and several were wounded by the same bomb. Describing the occurrences following the explosion, which took place on the 18th, Gordon Ware, a college mate of Suckley's, wrote in part as follows, his letter intended for private reading only, appearing in the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin* of May 24, 1917:

W. cranked up his car and took Henry, smiling and smoking, to K. "If I'm going to pass out, I'll have a cigarette first," he said, the calmest of the lot. The lieutenant's chauffeur, who is the butt of every one, proved himself a real hero and refused aid and transportation until Henry had been attended to. At K. everything possible was done for him, but only his strong constitution enabled him to last the night, an artery having been severed. He suffered little and was always conscious, not realizing until the end that he was going. Bright and cheerful, even the doctor broke down when he went. It gives an idea of the man's charm that he could so grip strangers, and it is difficult to measure our regard for him after three months' close association. As a section-leader he worked like a dog, and asked nothing of anyone which he would not do himself. The

hardest thing is that he must go before the section can make or break itself. The Legion of Honor was wired him.

Suckley was buried with all military honors. Shortly after, oddly enough, the same German airship which had dropped the bomb that killed Suckley was forced by fire or by engine trouble to descend on the same French camp that had been bombarded, the two Germans surrendering. The air-ship was capsized in landing and burned. Of the two occupants, Mr. Ware wrote:

The men were white and frightened, uncertain as to their reception. As their French was not good they could hardly have been re-assured by a lieutenant's threat to shoot them—emphasizing the point with drawn revolver—should their denial that there were bombs in the machine prove false. The officer was a good-looking young chap with a keen, American-like face. His non-com. was of the caricatured Prussian type, bull-necked, bullet-headed and brutal in appearance. The officer had three decorations, including the inevitable Iron Cross. "*Le moteur est—est—en panne,*" he said hesitatingly, and claimed that it had been going badly all the morning and at length, catching fire, had forced his descent, accidentally unsuccessful. I think he deliberately capsized it so as to destroy it.

XXI

A PRINCETON MAN'S EXPERIENCES

WHEN the war broke out Clarence V. S. Mitchell, of New York, was in the Harvard Law School, having been graduated from Princeton, in 1913, and from St. Paul's School, Concord, four years earlier. He sailed for England on the *Olympic* in September, 1914, to join the American Ambulance service in France. From the letters that he sent to his parents, his father, Clarence Blair Mitchell, has compiled a small volume which he has had privately printed under the title, "With a Military Ambulance in France, 1914–15." A large part of the value of this intimate personal record lies in the freshness and spontaneity of these letters, informal in character and, of necessity, unstudied in form.

Young Mitchell was exceptionally equipped for his job, for he spoke French fluently and preserved his American sense of humor as a means of counterbalancing the tragic sadness of

many of the scenes and incidents of his daily life. Finding on reaching London that he must be inoculated against typhoid, he notes:

> I saw Dr. D—— after lunch and he put 500,000,000 more typhoid germs into me for the sum of one guinea, which is not very much per germ, but seems quite a bit for the labor involved.

While waiting for his ambulance Mitchell became an orderly in Dr. Blake's hospital at Neuilly. One of his adventures in a Paris subway-station is thus described:

> I was sitting next to a woman with a small baby. All of a sudden she let out a yelp, threw the kid to me and ran to the other end of the platform, where she fell on the neck of a soldier. I did not know if I was to become an adopted father or not, but I could not drop the kid and sat there very much fussed, trying to amuse it. By evil luck a crowd of *ouvrières* came along and burst into shrieks of laughter. Their remarks were considerably more witty than polite! By the time the mother came back I was the centre of an amused crowd. Now, if I see any babies around, I don't sit down!

By November Mitchell got his ambulance, a big six-cylindered Packard, and was assigned

to a section of the Formation Harjes, with headquarters at the Château d'Ayencourt, near Montdidier, under the immediate leadership of Paul Rainey, the big-game hunter, who became his roommate. Four of the party were Princeton men, two of whom were doctors. Their principal work was the transportation of wounded soldiers from the railway-station to the military hospital of Val de Grace. Mitchell brought a serene philosophy to bear upon his job. "This ought to be a very healthy life," he notes; "no end of work, and no rum or late hours." He did not escape altogether, however. For early in 1915 he wrote that while he was convalescent from an attack of jaundice, a Mrs. H—— substituted jonquils for the roses which she found in his room, in order to make the color scheme in harmony with his complexion!

Not infrequently Mitchell was near the firing-line. Under a November (1914) date he wrote:

Thursday Night—I am writing this on a board laid on my steering wheel while I'm waiting outside the station for orders. I'm

stuck here till 12 P. M. It's a damp, foggy night, but the sight of the few lights gives a rather Whistler-like touch, and the cannons are booming at short intervals. They worked us for fair this P. M. I made any number of trips to a farm behind the firing line and to Wassy and Dannescourt, two villages, and brought in 40 wounded. Our cars brought in over 200. Off on another trip now, so so-long.

Back again from a trip to the civil hospital with a couple of wounded. This P. M. on my last trip to Wassy when it was almost dark I passed a battalion of artillery. They were coming over a ridge with the full moon rising behind them, and it was a most gorgeous silhouette. I also saw the Germans shelling aeroplanes. You'd hear a boom and then see a puff of brown smoke burst way up high, but they hit nothing. I didn't get nearer than two miles from our line, but every little bit helps. Our machines are the envy and admiration of every French doctor who sees them. They carry 6 couches, and the stretchers run in on pulleys, which is a new idea to these people.

There are 1,400 wounded in this station—the result of having taken the village of Oncy and having it retaken by the Germans this morning. The French intend making another attack to-night, so to-morrow ought to be a busy day. An old fellow rode in beside me to-day who had been in Algiers four years and we

had a great talk. He was shot lying down, the bullet going in above his shoulder and stopping just above his knee. He was also hit by a spent bullet on his Morocco medal, which pleased him no end,—and he was very gay. The station beggars description—stretchers everywhere and smells and groans rising in chorus. I've just been through giving them chocolate and cigarettes and doing any little thing I could, like taking letters, etc. They seem very grateful, and I enjoy doing it no end.

It is safe to say that it was Mitchell's custom to bring something besides newspapers with him on his return from trips to Paris, if one may judge from his reception at the hospital on one occasion:

I have been a good deal in Ward 3, bringing the men papers, etc., and the evening I came back from Paris I went in to see them and was quite pleased to have them let out yells of delight. In fact they yelled so loud that the doctors and three nurses came running in to see if a lamp had upset, and I felt rather foolish, though it was nice to be welcomed back.

Perhaps the most effective page in Mitchell's letters is the one in which he gives a picture, full of color and ending in a dramatic climax, of

a midnight mass which he and a few of his companions attended on Christmas Eve in 1914 in Montdidier:

We sat around in the smoking-room till 11.30 P. M., when I took Dr. B——, Miss L——, Miss L——, T—— and myself into midnight mass at St. Pierre. I think it was the most impressive service I've ever attended, and only those who have seen the chapel at St. Paul's on "Last Night" can begin to picture it. The church is an old fourteenth century one, with fair vaulting and very massive columns and a good organ with an echo high up at the end of the centre aisle.

The place was jammed, and I stood with my aviator friends near the back. It must have been a picturesque sight from the altar. The chairs crowded with women and then the aviators, some in the new light-blue uniforms, others in bearskin coats; then two of us in gray-green alongside and the dark splash of the two nurses' cloaks standing out against the red of the soldiers' trousers as they stood behind us in a crowd ten deep the whole width of the church. The lights on the columns and vaulting were beautiful, and when the organ came in to accompany the priest's chanting it seemed almost as if someone were picking the notes out of the moss-grown cracks in the arched roof. War seemed a long way off, but when the bells rang midnight and everything was as

silent as possible, you could hear sobbing all around; and as the last few strokes tolled, three "Err-roums!" from the 120s at La Boissière came as clear as could be, and you woke with a start.

PART V

RELIEF WORK IN BELGIUM AND IN NORTHERN FRANCE

XXII

HERBERT HOOVER AND "ENGINEERING EFFICIENCY"

BEFORE 1915 the name of Herbert Hoover was unknown in the United States save to a few mining engineers and financial men interested in mining ventures, and save also to the home circle in the little village of West Branch, Iowa, where he was born in 1874. Educated as a mining engineer at Leland Stanford University, where he was graduated in 1895, he passed his apprenticeship days in the service of the United States Geological Survey in Arkansas and in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, then became an assistant manager of mines in New Mexico and California, and finally acquired a large and varied experience in managing mines in West Australia and as chief engineer to the Chinese Bureau of Mines, finally reaching London in 1902. This was quick work—to go from college to a partnership in a great London mining house in seven

years; but Hoover, as the whole world has since come to know, was an exceptional man. He has written a chapter in the history of the Great War which will be read with the deepest interest for hundreds of years to come.

It is no part of the task of the present writer to describe in detail the work of the Commission for Relief in Belgium which Mr. Hoover organized and directed. The full story may be read in Professor Vernon Kellogg's "Fighting Starvation in Belgium," and in his "Headquarters Nights." Originally a pacifist and a humanitarian by conviction, Mr. Kellogg left Stanford University, where he was Professor of Entomology when the war started, and went abroad to do what he could to help relieve human suffering. He soon joined his friend of many years, Herbert Hoover, in the Commission for Relief in Belgium, and, except for a brief period when he was obliged to resume his university duties, he remained with the "C. R. B.," as it was called, until the Americans left Belgium. After being graduated in 1889 at the university of his native State of Kansas and after having studied at Cornell, Professor Kel-

logg passed several years in further study in Leipsic and in Paris. His consequent command of the German tongue made him especially valuable as the representative of the commission at the German headquarters in Belgium, and, when necessary, at the Great Headquarters of the General Staff of the German Army.

Only the briefest survey can be made here of the problems that the commission had to solve and of the means that were adopted to solve them. First, however, it may be advantageous to quote a paragraph from an address which Mr. Hoover delivered before the New York Chamber of Commerce in February, 1917, for the light that it throws upon the motives of the American volunteers who gave their services to this great cause:

The rights or wrongs of neither of these fierce contentions are for me to discuss. It is enough for an American that here, ground between millstones, are millions of helpless people whom America, and America alone, could save. Not only was it our duty, but it was our privilege. It was our privilege to forfend infinite suffering from these millions of people, to save

millions of lives, and it was our opportunity to demonstrate America's ability to do it in a large, generous and efficient way, befitting our country; but far beyond this, it was our opportunity to demonstrate that great strain of humanity and idealism which built up and in every essential crisis saved our Republic. We could throw a gleam of sunshine into the sweltering dungeon into which Europe has been plunged.

The three tenets of the organization were: first, volunteer service; second, high ideals, and third, decentralization. The difficulties involved in the problems of the purchase, transportation and distribution of huge food-supplies to the nine and a half million hungry people of Belgium and northern France are thus outlined by Professor Kellogg in his "Fighting Starvation in Belgium":

Rice from Rangoon, corn from Argentina, beans from Manchuria, wheat and meat and fats from America; and all, with the other things of the regular programme, such as sugar, condensed milk, coffee and cocoa, salt, salad oil, yeast, dried fish, etc., in great quantities, to be brought across wide oceans, through the dangerous mine-strewn Channel, and landed safely and regularly in Rotterdam, to be there

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The great central clothing supply station in Brussels.

Before this building was taken over by the Commission it was a music-hall and circus.

speedily transferred from ocean vessels into canal boats and urged on into Belgium and northern France, and from these taken again by railroad cars and horse-drawn carts to the communal warehouses and soup kitchens; and always and ever, through all the months, to get there *in time*—these were the buying and transporting problems of the Commission. One hundred thousand tons a month of food-stuffs from the world over, in great shiploads to Rotterdam; one hundred thousand tons a month thence in ever more and more divided quantities to the province and district storehouses, to the regional storehouses and mills, to the communal centres, and finally to the mouths of the people. And all to be done economically, speedily, and regularly; to be done, that is, with "engineering efficiency."

As all of these vast supplies of food were procured, controlled and distributed by the neutral American members of the commission, the people of Belgium not unnaturally looked upon them as the gift of the American people or of the American Government. As a matter of fact, the financial help which America gave the commission was so comparatively insignificant as almost to be negligible. Their own governments were incurring heavy debts in order to feed the people of Belgium and northern France.

Up to June 1, 1917, the commission had received from all sources $297,000,000 to carry on this work—$89,500,000 from the British Government and $66,000,000 from the French Government in the form of loans to the Belgian Government for relief work in Belgium; $108,000,000 from the French Government for relief work in the German-occupied provinces of northern France; $17,000,000 and $11,500,000 respectively as charity from private sources in Great Britain and in the United States; and finally $5,000,000 in profits in its commercial transactions, which were transferred to the commission's benevolent account. In June, 1917, the United States Government undertook to finance the work of the commission in the form of periodic loans to the French and Belgian Governments.

XXIII

AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS IN FIELD SERVICE

AT first Mr. Hoover turned naturally for executive assistants in his work to his American friends and associates in the engineering profession in London, Brussels and other near-by centres. He did not, however, confine himself to men of any one class. In time he secured the services, in Professor Kellogg's words, of "half a dozen college professors, a lawyer of large practice, two clergymen of practical turn of mind, a well-known explorer and sportsman, a dietetic expert, an architect of high repute, a magazine editor, a famous forester, a stock broker, a consul, an expert in children's diseases; altogether a wholesome variety!" Professor Kellogg himself was one of this group, several of whom also worked with the younger men as provincial delegates. The list of the American volunteers, mostly young men, who came in more or less direct contact with the Belgian and French people in this

relief work, successive resident directors, assistant directors, head delegates and assistants, numbers in all hardly a hundred and fifty, no more than forty of whom were ever on duty at one time in both Belgium and northern France.

Of these men, "representatives of an American type," Professor Kellogg, who as director at Brussels knew them well, says, in his "Fighting Starvation in Belgium":

> They came from forty-five different American colleges and universities; more from Harvard than any other one. Twenty of them had been selected by their colleges and their States to be Rhodes Scholars in Oxford University. These twenty had been thus already selected on a basis of scholarship, youthful energy, general capacity, and good-fellowship. They had not, however, been selected on a basis of experience in business or—least of all—relief work. And the rest of the one hundred and fifty were selected by us on about the same general grounds, adding the more special one of a usable, or buddingly usable, knowledge of the French language. Several could read German, a few speak it. That was also useful. But the Commission asked primarily for intelligence, character, youthful vigor, and enthusiasm, rather than specific attainments or experience.

In his "Journal from Our Legation in Belgium," Hugh Gibson, the First Secretary of the Legation, under date of December 20, 1914, has this to say of these young volunteers:

The first group of Americans to work on the relief came into Belgium this month. They are, for the most part, Rhodes scholars who were at Oxford and responded instantly to Hoover's appeal. They are a picked crew, and have gone into the work with enthusiasm. And it takes a lot of enthusiasm to get through the sort of pioneer work they have to do. They have none of the thrill of the fellows who have gone into the flying corps or the ambulance service. They have ahead of them a long winter of motoring about the country in all sorts of weather, wrangling with millers and stevedores, checking cargoes and costs, keeping the peace between the Belgians and the German authorities, observing the rules of the game toward everybody concerned, and above all keeping neutral. It is no small undertaking for a lot of youngsters hardly out of college, but so far they have done splendidly.

Of the work that these young Americans did Professor Kellogg speaks in the highest terms:

Its members have crossed the channel in convoyed English despatch boats, passed through closed frontiers, scurried about in swift motors

over all the occupied territory in which few other cars than German military ones ever moved, visited villages at the front under shell fire, lived at the very Great Headquarters of all the German armies of the West, been trusted on their honor to do a thousand and one things and be in a thousand and one places prohibited to all other civilians, and have lived up to the trust. They have suffered from the mistakes of uninformed or stupid soldiers, and spent nights in jail; they have taken chances under bombing airmen, and been falsely but dangerously accused as spies; but despite obstacles and delays and danger they have carried the little triangular red-lettered white C. R. B. flag to every town and hamlet in the imprisoned land, and have gulped and passed on wet-eyed as the people by the roads uncovered to the little flag, with all its significance of material and spiritual encouragement. Under this flag they have been protector and protected at once.

The conditions in the German-occupied portions of northern France differed greatly, of course, from those in Belgium, but the conduct of the Americans was equally to their credit. On this point Professor Kellogg says:

It is gratifying to be able to say that in the whole history of the stay of the Commission's men in northern France, during which at least

thirty different men were used, no single complaint of dishonorable or unneutral conduct on their part was made by the German military authorities. Some of the escort officers occasionally had complaints to make of the immaturity of some of the Americans, or of their manner, not sufficiently stiff or precise properly to impress other German officers dining with them, and one complained rather bitterly—I remember, to my amazement—that his American persisted in wearing a ragged overcoat! But despite the strain of sympathy and anger imposed on them by being compelled to see the sufferings of the helpless French under the rigors of military control, and, too often, military brutality, our men held their strong feelings in check. They were not only bound in honor, but they knew that their mission could be accomplished only by the maintenance of a correct behavior; they could help the imprisoned people much more by limiting themselves to the all-important work of the *ravitaillement* than by giving way to any temptation, however strong, of unneutral acts or speech.

XXIV

AMERICAN IDEALISM AND HUMOR

PROFESSOR KELLOGG observes that most of the young Americans in Belgian relief work were fortunate in having two things that were of the greatest value to them: "a supporting idealism and a saving sense of humor." In illustration of the unexpected revelation in a single German of this latter trait, he tells, in his "Fighting Starvation in Belgium," a story of Edward D. Curtis, of Chestnut Hill, Boston. Curtis, a graduate of Harvard, was at Cambridge University, England, when the war began. He immediately joined Mr. Hoover's London committee to help stranded Americans get home, and followed his chief to Belgium, remaining in the service of the commission until the end, in April, 1917. Of him Professor Kellogg says:

Curtis, the first of our Brussels-Holland couriers, had to have these qualities to stand his seventeen arrests by German sentries, and

Warren* his three days in a military prison at Antwerp, and yet keep unconcernedly on with their work. Curtis's sense of humor was fortunately well matched by a German's—a single German's—when the young American, a little annoyed by an unusual number of stoppings on the road one day, handed his pass to the tenth man who demanded it, with a swift, highly uncomplimentary personal allusion to his tormentor, in pure Americanese. The sentry handed it back with a dry, "Much obliged, the same to you." He was probably a formerly-of-Chicago reservist who knew the argot.

A Yale man, Scott Hurtt Paradise, a Rhodes scholar at Oxford, experienced a similar surprise once which he described in the *Yale Alumni Weekly:*

It is only fair to say that in Belgium one hears much less about atrocities than one does in the United States or England. The old Landsturmers, with their dingy uniforms, their long beards and their gentle eyes, seem sadly out of place guarding the railroad tracks in the cold rainy nights. One of them once remarked to us, to our great astonishment, as he read our passes, "Haven't you any English or American newspapers? I'm so damned lonely I don't know what to do," and this in perfect Yankee.

* Robert H. Warren, an American Rhodes scholar at Oxford, who died at Bordeaux in November, 1916.

In the same communication Paradise called attention to the curious coincidence that Horace Fletcher, the apostle of mastication, should have been in Brussels when the colossal problem of feeding the whole Belgian people was being solved:

> In fact, Horace Fletcher, the great advocate of mastication, a merry, rosy, little old gentleman comfortably ensconced in Brussels, attributes the unusually good health which prevails in Belgium this winter [1914–15] to the necessity for sleeping much, eating little and chewing that little very much, and is quite jubilant over this conclusive vindication of his theories.

In the list at the end of Professor Kellogg's book Mr. Fletcher is recorded as having been in the service of the commission from February to November, 1915.

Incessantly harassed and annoyed as they were by the number and variety of regulations which the Germans imposed upon them, the Americans kept their tempers and even managed to see the humorous side of some of the situations. Thus, according to Professor Kellogg, the delegate at Liège, being in a facetious

mood, is said to have written his confrère at Namur as follows:

DEAR DELEGATE:

I started three canal boats last week for Namur. I thought it safer to send three in order that one should finally reach you. The "*Attends Je Viens*" has already been stopped—the towing horse had no passport. I hear that the "*Marchons Toujours*" is also not likely to get through, as the skipper's wife has given birth to a baby *en voyage* whose photo is, naturally, not on the passport. Betting is strong, however, on the "*Laisse-moi Tranquille.*" Be sure to take up the bottom planks when she arrives, as I understand Rotterdam thinks she may be carrying contraband.

At first the Germans were utterly unable to understand the humanitarian idealism which had prompted the Americans to undertake so huge a task as the feeding of the destitute Belgians. Professor Kellogg narrates this incident in illustration of their sceptical attitude:

In an interview Mr. Hoover had with one of the most important officers of von Bissing's staff, this official broke off the general discussion to say abruptly:

"Now, we are all just human here, and I want to ask you, as man to man, one question:

What do you Americans get out of this business? Why are you doing it?"

"I tried to explain first with evenness of temper and then more emphatically," writes Mr. Hoover in his memorandum of the conversation, "that the whole thing was simply a humane effort; and that not only did none of us get anything out of it, but that most of us lost something by it. But I found it too difficult to be emphatic enough about this to make any real impression on him."

Educated for years in a school which taught that in time of war any act however treacherous or dishonorable was justifiable, if it was committed in the interest of the State, the Germans were utterly unable to believe that the American delegates would not act as spies or as carriers of contraband, if the opportunity presented itself. This characteristically Teutonic attitude of mind was met by a frank honesty that was baffling though by no means convincing. Thus Hugh Gibson, in speaking in his "Journal" of Edward Curtis in his relations with the Germans, says:

He exudes silence and discretion, but does not miss any fun or any chance to advance the general cause. Of course it is taking the Ger-

mans some time to learn his system. He is absolutely square with them, and gets a certain amount of fun out of their determined efforts to find some sort of contraband on him. They can hardly conceive of his being honest, and think his seeming frankness is merely an unusually clever dodge to cover up his transgressions.

XXV

NARRATIVES OF PRINCETON MEN

FROM the start Princeton men took a prominent part in the work of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, and the narratives of their experiences and observations will be material of interest to the historian of the future. Early in 1916 the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* printed a lively account, received through Dean Howard McClenahan, who had been in Belgium, of some of the experiences of three young Princeton graduates who had been engaged in the field-work of the commission. They were Gilchrist B. Stockton, 1914, William H. Tuck, 1912, and Richard R. Lytle, Jr., 1913, Lytle and Stockton having been among the Rhodes scholars at Oxford who dropped their work in response to Mr. Hoover's call for American volunteers. Selections from this communication follow:

Stockton was Ed. Curtis's successor as courier. That means he raced back and forth

from Brussels to Bergen-op-Zoom carrying the mail and confidential messages. His "G. G. pass" was an extraordinary monstrosity conceived and executed by the Germans, and worn in a celluloid case about his neck. The exact dimensions of the "G. G. pass" I do not know, but it looked about a yard square. It bore his photograph in a soft shirt and was signed personally by Governor-General von Bissing. One adventure of Stockton's which I remember was his finding a German soldier, on the Putte frontier, who came from Jacksonville, Fla., [Mr. Stockton's home] and he spoke the same kind of English that Stockton speaks. From the position of Mercury to the Commission he was promoted to the Antwerp staff, where I was his chief.

The day he arrived I sent him out to take the inventory of all of the regional warehouses and mills in the province. Stockton can speak almost no French, but by the sign language and by use of certain well conned phrases he managed to bring in a perfect report by evening. He evolved a system of questionnaires, and very methodically and easily kept track of the communes in his charge. His brief describing the method for using these questionnaires went to all the provincial delegates in Belgium as a model for their work.

After two months' service in Antwerp—from August 1st to the last week in September [1915]—he was transferred to St. Quentin in the North of France, where his daily life is carefully

supervised by a German official whom we call a nurse, and where his professional life is closely looked after by a whole staff of army people. He works there with a French committee instead of with Belgians, but every conversation, every telegram, every letter and every note book is carefully censored.

Tuck had just arrived a short time before I left. Everyone was very much impressed with his maturity and his familiarity with the French language. He was sent to Mons in the province of Hainault to take charge of that large and important province, and we all feel sure that he will make good.

Before Tuck was sent to Mons, however, he was "rushed" by about every province in Belgium. It was really amusing to see how we fell over each other in our frantic attempts to get Tuck, and how like a freshman being rushed for a college fraternity he proved to be.

Lytle plunged headlong into the work of the Commission in the province of Luxemburg. Immediately after the veteran delegate Wellington had gone back to Oxford he had a hard time. Worst of all he got finally into an automobile accident, in which his car smashed a car belonging to the Kreischef of one of the principal regions of Luxemburg. Lytle's letter to the Governor of the province of Luxemburg was not calculated to smooth the feelings of the Governor, and the Governor wrote back stating that Mr. Lytle's letter and his bearing at the time of the examination and detention were

such that he, the Governor, felt called upon to "proceed against him for insult"—unless Lytle personally apologize. Lytle preferred to leave the country and so the matter rested.

For three months, from January until the end of March, 1917, another Princeton man, Arthur Bartlett Maurice, formerly editor of *The Bookman*, was in the service of the commission in Belgium and northern France. Mr. Maurice contributed to several issues of the *Princeton Alumni Weekly*, in the following May and June, a detailed narrative of his experiences and those of the men with whom he was associated during this period. This paragraph describes how he and his companions were housed in Brussels:

Some of the men of the C. R. B. stayed in *pensions*. But most of us lived in houses which had been placed at the disposal of the Commission by the owners for the double motive of appreciation of the work that was being done and in order to keep them from being occupied by the "Boches." It was at No. 126 Avenue Louise, a broad thoroughfare lined by some of the city's finest residences and running from the circle of Boulevards to the Bois de la Cambre, that I went to live. The owner of the

house had been lucky enough to cross into France before the occupation and was living in Paris. In the house, which had been left in charge of two servants, eight of us,* Leach, Maverick, Wickes, Kittredge, Arrowsmith, Curtis, Sperry and I, had some sort of headquarters. It was seldom that more than four or five appeared at the breakfast table. Maverick was a North of France man. Wickes spent the greater part of the week in Namur. Sperry usually had an engagement elsewhere. But no matter what the number present, here was no chance to complain of the monotony of existence. "The life of an American delegate is a hard life," Maverick one day said whimsically. "Here we are forced to live in a place quite as humble as the average house that you see on Fifth Avenue overlooking Central Park. I am reduced to the humiliation of riding about in an Overland car with a chauffeur only in half livery. To-night I shall probably be obliged to dine at the Taverne Royale." But in a way Maverick's flippancy was designed to cheer us up. When the words were spoken the thermometer at the side of the mantelpiece registered 8° above zero Fahrenheit. It was the bitterest winter in recent history and coal was not to be had.

* Dr. Charles N. Leach, of San Francisco; Robert V. Maverick, of San Antonio, Tex.; Francis C. Wickes, of Rochester, N. Y.; Tracy B. Kittredge, of Berkeley, Cal.; Robert Arrowsmith, of Orange, N. J.; Edward D. Curtis, of Chestnut Hill, Boston, and William H. Sperry, of Redwood City, Cal. Of this group of eight, seven were college men, there being two representatives of Princeton and one each of Stanford, California, Williams, Columbia, and Harvard.

Of the daily life of the delegates Mr. Maurice wrote:

In Belgium last winter there were about thirty men, who were C. R. B. delegates in the strict sense of the term. A delegate gave his services. His transportation from the United States to Belgium was provided, and he was allowed a certain daily sum to cover the actual expenses of habitation and food. First among the delegates were the director, Warren Gregory, and the assistant director, Prentiss Gray. Both Californians. I am not going to tell what I think of them, because it would sound like fulsome flattery of Mr. Hoover, who selected them. Under their direction the delegates were assigned and shifted. There were the North of France men. A North of France man was sent to Lille, or Saint-Quentin, or Valenciennes, or Charleville, or Longwy. Day and night he was in the company of a German officer. The two had desks in the same office and occupied adjoining bedrooms. Somehow or other the officer always got the best desk and the best bedroom. They breakfasted, lunched, dined together. They sat side by side in the back seat of the motor car. If the officer wished to hold nightly revel in some café, he had to persuade the delegate to accompany him. The American was supposed to hold no communica tion with any unit of the civil population save in the presence of his officer. It was a Siamese twins kind of existence.

The German formula for the creation and maintenance of a great nation ruled from the top, "organization and obedience," could not, of course, be made to fit a democracy like America. How this German point of view was impressed upon the American delegates was illustrated by an incident which Mr. Maurice described:

But there are certain memories which we all of us took away, no matter how slight and short-lived was the acquaintance. We recall, save in one or two cases, an artificial politeness, an attempt at bonhommie which hardly concealed the sneer. "What is German militarism?" I will tell you. "It is order, discipline, obedience." That is always and ever the refrain. That covers all, explains all, justifies all. To them these virtues exist nowhere else in the world. We, in particular, are barbarians. There had been some slight infraction of one of the ninety and nine thousand rules that govern life in Belgium by a member of the C. R. B. and at the headquarters in the Place Royale Major B. was storming at Sperry of California. Sperry was not the offender, but as he was the passport man, official abuse usually descended upon his head. But a sense of humor had Sperry, and he bore it all stoically. "You come from a country and a wild western state where you have no laws," so ran the in-

dictment. "You don't understand what laws are or what they are made for. Don't you know there is a war?" "It seems to me," replied Sperry softly, "that I have heard of it." "Heard of it!" Major B. exploded. "I think we have heard of it. We have lost a million men."

Mr. Maurice was in the first group of seven Americans connected with the commission who left Brussels on March 29, 1917; the other Americans followed a few days later. The roundabout journey from Brussels to Paris along the Rhine and through Switzerland consumed six nights and five days.

XXVI

EFFECT ON THE AMERICANS OF GERMAN METHODS

ORIGINALLY, as we have seen, a pacifist, with humanitarian impulses, Professor Kellogg joined Mr. Hoover's forces in Belgium with an open, unprejudiced mind. His intimate contact with the Germans as the conquerors of Belgium, and his observations of their attitude of mind and of their methods as rulers, turned him from a pacifist into a would-be belligerent. Of the effect upon the active members of the commission as a whole who came in constant contact with the wheels and cogs, big and little, of the German war-machine, he says, in his "Headquarters Nights":

The experience of our Relief Commission with this machine has been wearing. It has also been illuminating. For it has resulted in the conversion of an idealistic group of young Americans of open mind and fairly neutral original attitude into a band of convinced men, most of whom, since their forced retirement

from Belgium, have ranged themselves among four armies devoted to the annihilation of that machine and to the rescue and restoration of that one of the victims, the sight of whose mangling and suffering brought unshed tears to the eyes and silent curses to the lips of those Americans so often during the long two and a half years of the relief work.

We were not haters of Germany when we went to Belgium. We have simply, by inescapable sights and sounds and knowledge forced on us, been made into what we have become.

The greatest single incident in bringing about this change of mind was the action of "the highest military authority"—not Von Bissing's Belgium government, Professor Kellogg says—in deporting something more than a hundred thousand able-bodied Belgian men to Germany. The world, he says, needs the whole story. He goes on:

Unfortunately it cannot yet be written. Among other things lacking is the knowledge of just how many of the hundred thousand Belgian slaves have died or are to die in Germany. Some have been sent back hastily, so that they would not die in Germany; they die on the returning trains, or soon after they get back. Or, what is worse, some do not die, but continue to live, helpless physical wrecks.

The deportations were not hazy to us. They were the most vivid, shocking, convincing single happening in all our enforced observation and experience of German disregard of human suffering and human rights in Belgium. . . .

The deportations occurred near the end of the period of our stay in Belgium. They were the final and fully sufficient exhibit, prepared by the great German machine, to convince absolutely any one of us who might still have been clinging to his original desperately maintained attitude of neutrality, that it was high time that we were somewhere else—on the other side of the trench-line, by preference.

PART VI

AMERICAN VOLUNTEER AIRMEN

XXVII

THE LAFAYETTE, OR AMERICAN, ESCADRILLE

NO development of the Great War has possessed for American youth the novelty, the picturesqueness, or the fascination of the air-ship service. It isn't many years ago that the feat of sailing an air-ship across the Channel from France to England, a distance of less than twenty-five miles, was hailed as an exploit of extraordinary skill and daring. At the present writing there are those who seriously advocate sending the fleet of huge American-built, Handley Page bombing air-ships, with their spread of a hundred feet, to the battle front in France under their own power by a zigzag course to Newfoundland, the Azores, and Spain. The longest leg of this journey, from Newfoundland to the Azores, could be made by one of these ships, barring accidents, in about thirteen hours.

Up to the outbreak of the war the monoplane and the biplane were regarded as wonderful toys of problematical commercial value. Even the Germans, to the diabolical ingenuity of whom

the development of the poison-gas bomb and the flame-throwers was due, seem to have had no idea of the prominent part which the heavier-than-air flying-machines were to play in the conduct of war. They had great hopes that the Zeppelins which they possessed would give them the mastery of the air for unrestricted bombing purposes, but these monsters proved to be too unwieldy and generally too untrustworthy for this purpose. The latest attempt of Zeppelins to bomb English cities, in August, 1918, was a complete fiasco.

At first the air-ships were used by both the French and the Germans for observation purposes only. It is a legend of the service, which ought to be true even if it is not, that at the first meeting over the fighting lines of two French and German air-ships, the pilots greeted each other pleasantly. At the next meeting one—we may safely assume that it was the German!—scowled and shook his fist at the other. At the third encounter one threw a bottle at his adversary, and at the next meeting fired a pistol. The transition to the quick-firing gun was then rapid.

The air service appealed with especial force to the sporting instincts of the young Americans who were eager to help France in her dire extremity. Its chief fascination lay in the fact that it offered practically free play in a limitless medium to individual initiative, judgment, and skill. This was a form of warfare which harmonized perfectly with American traditions and with the American temperament.

Any narrative of the exploits of American volunteer airmen in the Great War must begin with the formation of the Lafayette Escadrille. The full story of the organization, after months of ceaseless effort of this corps, was told by one of its two surviving members, Elliott C. Cowdin, in an article which he published in the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin* for March 7, 1918. Cowdin gave the full credit for the formation of this flying corps and for its incorporation in the French flying service to the energy and persistence of Norman Prince. He said:

Norman Prince had spent many years and made many friends in France, and felt it his privilege and duty to serve her in the hour of

her need. Prince arrived in Paris by way of England early in January, 1915. Knowing there were many Americans in the Foreign Legion and the various ambulance units, and being one of the pioneer aviators of the United States, he conceived the idea of forming an aero squadron, composed exclusively of Americans, to join the French Army. He consulted with his French friends, of whom Lieutenant Jacque de Lesseps was the most enthusiastic and was instrumental in getting the French War Department to listen to Prince's ideas and plans. He solicited the aid of several prominent Americans then residing in Paris, but they all declined to be identified in any way with the scheme, so that Prince had to fight his own battle, single-handed. The French Government told him they could not use his services, as aviation was so popular among the soldiers and so many were seeking to be admitted to this service that they had more aviators than they could use.

This decision was finally reversed through the influence of M. de Sillac, who was connected with the Department of Foreign Affairs and to whom Prince had been introduced by John J. Chapman, the father of Victor Chapman. Of the original group of young American airmen who formed the Lafayette Escadrille, Cowdin wrote as follows:

Early in May [1916] we were all mobilized at the Alsatian front as the "Lafayette Squadron" with French officers, Captain Thenault and Lieutenant de Laage, in command. The original members, besides those officers, were: Norman Prince, William Thaw, Victor Chapman and Kiffin Rockwell, of the Foreign Legion; James McConnell, who had already done good work in the American Ambulance before joining the French Aviation; Bert Hall and myself. Five of the original nine have been killed at the front.

We remained but a short time in Alsace and were then transferred to the Verdun Sector, where we were joined by such men as Lufbery, Masson, Clyde Balsley (who was severely wounded the first week), Dudley Hill, Lawrence Rumsey and Chouteau Johnson.

The Squadron has increased steadily, so that at the end of last year [1917] a total of 325 men had joined it, counting those training in various schools. Of this number, some 25 have given their lives, several have been wounded, and several are prisoners.

Norman Prince, Victor Chapman, Kiffin Rockwell, Jim McConnell and Lieutenant de Laage gave their lives gloriously for the great cause, and the only surviving member of the original squadron left at the front is William Thaw, now a Major with the American Force, still flying and doing great work for his country.

Norman Prince fortunately lived long enough to see his long-cherished ideas successfully

carried out and the Lafayette Squadron at the height of its success.

The best collection of pen-portraits of these early members of the Lafayette, or, as it was as often called, the American, Escadrille and the most vivid and entertaining description of the life they led on the ground and in the air, are to be found in a paper which one of their number, James McConnell, contributed to the *World's Work* for November, 1916, and which was later incorporated in his book, "Flying for France." To McConnell and to those of his companions who for many long months had been trench-diggers in the Foreign Legion or drivers of ambulances, the transition to the choicest branch of the French military service was as startling as it was welcome. "For us all," says McConnell, "it contained unlimited possibilities for initiative and for service to France, and for them [Rockwell and Chapman] it must have meant, too, the restoration of personality lost during those months in the trenches with the Foreign Legion."

As a good air-pilot was considered to be of as much value to the army as a battalion of troops,

nothing was left undone to make the Americans comfortable and contented. McConnell is most amusing in his serene contemplation of the comparative luxury of his new surroundings. Met at the railway-station at Luxeuil, perhaps twenty miles northwest of Belfort, by a motor-car which took him to the aviation-field, he recalled, as he lolled back against the soft leather cushions, how in his apprenticeship days at Pau he had had to walk six miles for his laundry! When he arrived at the headquarters of the escadrille his surprise was even greater:

> The equipment awaiting us at the field was even more impressive than our automobile. Everything was brand new, from the fifteen Fiat trucks to the office, magazine, and rest tents. And the men attached to the Escadrille! At first sight they seemed to outnumber the Nicaraguan army—mechanicians, chauffeurs, armorers, motor cyclists, telephonists, wireless operators, Red Cross stretcher bearers, clerks! Afterward I learned they totalled seventy-odd, and that all of them were glad to be connected with the American Escadrille.
>
> In their hangars stood our trim little Nieuports. I looked mine over with a new feeling of importance and gave orders to my mechanicians for the mere satisfaction of being able to.

To find oneself the sole proprietor of a fighting airplane is quite a treat, let me tell you. One gets accustomed to it, though, after one has used up two or three of them—at the French Government's expense.

Rooms were assigned to us in a villa adjoining the famous hot baths of Luxeuil, where Cæsar's cohorts were wont to besport themselves. We messed with our officers, Captain Thenault and Lieutenant de Laage de Mieux, at the best hotel in town. An automobile was always on hand to carry us to the field. I began to wonder whether I was a summer resorter instead of a soldier.

When on his arrival McConnell's attention was called to eight little boxes on the table and he was informed that each contained a Croix de Guerre which was to be sent to the family of a man that had been killed on the last bombing expedition, his surroundings acquired a different meaning, and he noted, with a touch of grim humor:

I thought of the luxury we were enjoying: our comfortable beds, baths, and motor cars; and then I recalled the ancient custom of giving a man selected for the sacrifice a royal time of it before the appointed day.

Of the seven members of the American Escadrille who were together at Luxeuil, three—

McConnell, Chapman, and Rockwell—were novices in flying, just arrived from the assembly-station for aviators near Paris. The other four had had more or less experience with air-ships of various types. McConnell calls William Thaw, of Pittsburgh, the pioneer of them all, because he had been in the French flying service since early in 1915, and by the autumn of that year he was pilot of a Caudron biplane, doing good work as an observer. Meanwhile Norman Prince, of Boston, and Elliott Cowdin, of New York, who were the first Americans to enter the French aviation service, coming direct from the United States, had been at the front on Voisin air-ships with a "cannon" mounted in the bow. Finally Bert Hall, whose home was in Texas, had got himself transferred, according to McConnell, from the Foreign Legion to aviation soon after Thaw did, and learning the art quickly, had been flying a Nieuport fighting machine.

Of the men mentioned by Cowdin who joined the American Escadrille after its headquarters were shifted to the Verdun sector, Raoul Lufbery, "American citizen and soldier, but dweller

in the world at large," as McConnell calls him, hailed from Wallingford, Conn. Didier Masson had been a flier for exhibition purposes in the United States, Clyde Balsley was from El Paso, Dudley Hill from Peekskill, Lawrence Rumsey from Buffalo, and Chouteau Johnson from New York. All of the men of this group, except Lufbery and Masson, had been in the ambulance service, but in McConnell's expressive phrase, they were "tired of being non-combatant spectators." McConnell himself was born in Chicago, was educated at the University of Virginia, and was in business in Carthage, North Carolina, until January, 1915, when he sailed for France and entered the American Ambulance service. Chapman's home city was New York, and Kiffin Rockwell came from Atlanta, Georgia.

The members of the American Escadrille were provided, to their great joy, with Nieuport air-ships, which meant that they were to form a fighting unit. The Nieuport was then the best type of fighting airplane the French possessed. It was a one-man air-ship, with a maximum speed of about 110 miles an hour and with a

machine-gun mounted on its roof. The pilot fired the gun with one hand and controlled his ship with the other and with his feet. Each of the machines bore, as the distinguishing mark of the Escadrille, the head in profile of an American Indian; and on the side of the car of each was an individual identification mark, that on Hall's being the large letters BERT, and on MacConnell's the letters MAC.

Flying in one of these Nieuports, while the squadron was still at Luxeuil, Rockwell brought down the Escadrille's first German airplane. McConnell described the combat as follows:

He was flying alone when, over Thann, he came upon a German on reconnaissance. He dived and the German turned toward his own lines, opening fire from a long distance. Rockwell kept straight after him. Then, closing to within thirty yards, he pressed on the release of his machine gun, and saw the enemy gunner fall backward and the pilot crumble up sideways in his seat. The 'plane flopped downward and crashed to earth just behind the German trenches. Swooping close to the ground, Rockwell saw its débris burning away brightly. He had turned the trick with but four shots and only one German bullet had struck his Nieuport. An observation post telephoned the news

before Rockwell's return, and he got a great welcome. All Luxeuil smiled upon him—particularly the girls. But he couldn't stay to enjoy his popularity. The Escadrille was ordered to the sector of Verdun.

XXVIII

THE FIRST AMERICAN AVIATOR TO FALL

VICTOR CHAPMAN'S passion, as we have seen, was for color and scenery, with an admixture of danger. His flying papers admitted him, after ten wasted months in the Foreign Legion, into the French aviation service, and by the end of August, 1915, he was enjoying the scenery and a modicum of danger from a bombing machine. Here is his description, from one of his letters, of the method of dropping a bomb from an air-ship:

We must be nearing the spot, for the Lieutenant motioned me to load the projectile. This is by far the most difficult operation, for the 155 shell with its tin tail looking like a torpedo four feet long, is hung under the body and without seeing its nose even one has to reach down in front of the pilot, put the *detonateur* in, then the *percuteur* and screw it fast. After which I pulled off a safety device. You may imagine how I scrambled round in a fur coat and two pair of leather trousers and squeezed myself to get my arm down the hole. I really

had a moment's nervousness that the *detonateur* would not stay in the hole but fly back into the *hélice*. However, all went well and the Lieutenant handed me the plan of the town of Dillingen where there were said to be huge casting works. Bad map it was and I got nothing out of the inaudible explanation and gestures. We were just passing over the river Saar by Pachten. Everything on the detail map was red. I still have scruples about dropping on dwelling houses—they might be Alsatians. Right under us was a great junction of railway lines, tracks and sidings. "That's a go," I thought, and pulled the handle when it came in the sighter. A slight sway and below me the blue-gray shell poised and dipped its head. Straight away and then it seemed to remain motionless. Pretty soon its tail began to wag in small circles and then I lost sight of it over some tree-tops. "Pshaw," I thought, "there it's going to fall on its side, and into a garden. *Tant pis!*" When all at once, in the middle of the railroad tracks a cloud of black smoke which looked big even from that height. The Lieutenant said afterwards that I rocked the whole ship when I saw where it had fallen!

Experience in a bombing plane filled Chapman with a desire to qualify as a fighting pilot, and to join the squadron which his friends, Norman Prince and Elliott Cowdin, were trying to form. His letters for the next few

months gave in detail his experiences at the aviation school at Avord, where he was learning to fly. By the following April, 1916, he was at Luxeuil with his mates of the American Escadrille. In one of his letters he said that after their Nieuports arrived, he learned more about flying in five days than he had learned in the previous five months.

Chapman's first letter from the Verdun sector was dated May 23, 1916. A month later, to a day, he was killed. He wrote few letters in the interval, apparently being too busy flying to have time to write often. Here is his description, from a letter dated June 1, of one morning's work:

This morning we all started off at three, and, not having made concise enough arrangements, got separated in the morning mist. I found Prince, however, and we went to Douaumont where we found two German *réglage* machines unprotected and fell upon them. A skirmish, a spitting of guns, and we drew away. It had been badly executed, that manœuvre! But ho! another Boche heading for Verdun! Taking the direction stick between my knees I tussled and fought with the *mitrailleuse* and finally charged the *rouleau*, all the while eyeing

my Boche and moving across Vaux towards Etain. I had no altitude with which to overtake him, but a little more speed. So I got behind his tail and spit till he dived into his own territory. Having lost Norman, I made a tour to the Argonne and on the way back saw another fat Boche. "No protection machine in sight." I swooped, swerved to the right, to the left, almost lost, but then came up under his lee keel by the stern. (It's the one position they cannot shoot from.) I seemed a dory alongside a schooner. I pulled up my nose to let him have it. Crr—Crr—Crr—a cartridge jammed in the barrel. He jumped like a frog and fled down to his grounds. Later in the morning I made another stroll along the lines. Met a flock of Nieuports, and saw across the way a squad of white-winged L. V. G. How like a game of prisoner's base it all is! I scurry out in company, and they run away. They come into my territory and I being alone, take to my heels. They did come after me once too! Faster they are than I, but I had height so they could but leer up at me with their dead-white wings and black crosses like sharks, and they returned to their own domain.

Under the stimulus of the tremendous conflict going on before Verdun, Chapman fought incessantly and fearlessly. In his "With the French Flying Corps" Carroll D. Winslow, who at the time was near the headquarters of

the American Escadrille and saw much of his compatriots, describes one incident in Chapman's career:

I remember one curious incident that occurred while I was in the Verdun sector. Victor Chapman, who was doing combat work with the American Escadrille, after a brush with four German aeroplanes, was forced to descend to our field. Not only had he received a bad scalp wound from a bullet, but his machine had been riddled and nearly wrecked. One bullet had even severed a metal stability control. By all the rules of aviation he should have lost control of his aeroplane and met with a fatal accident. But Chapman was an expert pilot. He simply held on to the broken rod with one hand, while with the other he steered his machine. This needed all the strength at his command, but he had the power and the skill necessary to bring him safely to earth. A surgeon immediately dressed his wound, our mechanics repaired his machine. The repairs completed, he was off and up again in pursuit of some more Boches. I must say that every one considered him a remarkable pilot. He was absolutely fearless, and always willing and able to fly more than was ever required of him. His machine was a sieve of patched-up bullet holes.

Chapman's head was still in bandages when, a few days later, he was killed, falling inside

the German lines. Clyde Balsley, to whom he was taking some oranges when he went to the assistance of several of his hard-pressed companions, had been dangerously wounded and was in a near-by hospital. Kiffin Rockwell sent to Chapman's stepmother a long letter, which appears in the memoir prefixed to Chapman's "Letters from France," describing the circumstances attending his fellow flier's last combat. In the course of that letter Rockwell wrote:

The following morning [June 23] the weather was good, and he insisted on going out at the regular hour with the rest. There were no machines over the lines, so the *sortie* was uneventful. He came in, and at lunch fixed up a basket of oranges which he said he would take to Balsley. We went up to the field, and Captain Thenault, Prince and Lufbery got ready to go out and over the lines. Victor put the oranges in his machine and said that he would follow the others over the lines for a little trip and then go and land at the hospital. The Captain, Prince and Lufbery started first. On arriving at the lines they saw at first two German machines which they dived on. When they arrived in the midst of them, they found that two or three other German machines had arrived also. As the odds were against the three, they did not fight long, but immediately

started back into our lines and without seeing Victor.

When they came back we thought that Victor was at the hospital. But later in the afternoon a *pilote* of a Maurice Farman and his passenger sent in a report. The report was that they saw three Nieuports attack five German machines, that at this moment they saw a fourth Nieuport arriving with all speed who dived in the midst of the Germans, that two of the Germans dived towards their field and that the Nieuport fell through the air no longer controlled by the *pilote*. In a fight it is practically impossible to tell what the other machines do, as everything happens so fast and all one can see is the beginning of a fight and then, in a few seconds, the end. That fourth Nieuport was Victor and, owing to the fact that the motor was going at full speed when the machine fell, I think that he was killed instantly.

Chapman was the first American aviator to fall in battle. To the French, the fact that a young American volunteer of his type had made the supreme sacrifice in fighting in defense of their cause was of deep significance. "The death fight of Victor Chapman," wrote André Chevillon, "touches our imagination with fire." "Never," said M. Jusserand, the French Ambassador to the United States, on Lafayette

Day, September 6, 1916—"Never in my country will the American volunteers of the Great War be forgotten; some, according to their power, offering their pens, or their money, or their help to our wounded, or their lives." The idealism of which young Chapman was the symbol is represented, at the present writing, by more than a million and a half of American soldiers in France, with hundreds of thousands of others preparing to follow them.

XXIX

KIFFIN ROCKWELL'S LAST COMBAT

WHEN Kiffin Rockwell was writing to Chapman's parents of his friend Victor's last fight, he little thought that in a few weeks he too would be out of the great game of war. He was a dashing fighter, as appears from McConnell's narrative already given of the manner in which he brought down the American Escadrille's first German airplane while flying over the Vosges. At Verdun he was severely wounded in one of his numerous combats with the Germans, an explosive bullet striking his wind-shield and tearing several gashes in his face.

Rockwell, however, was no stranger to wounds. When in the Foreign Legion he was wounded at Carency. Chapman met him at the aviation-camp at Avord, and in a letter dated September 27, 1915, referred to him as follows:

I find a compatriot I am proud to own here. A tall, lanky Kentuckian, called Rockwell. He got his transfer about a month ago from the *Légion*. He was wounded on the ninth of May, like Kisling. In fact one-half of the *2me de Marche*, 2300, were wounded that day, not counting the killed and missing. He gives much the best account I have heard. Having charged with the third battalion and being wounded in the leg on the last *bouck*, he crawled back across the entire field in the afternoon.

By the middle of September, after having been in the Verdun sector since May 20, the American Escadrille started from Bar-le-Duc, as was supposed, for the Paris aviation centre at Le Bourget; and the flying men were like a lot of schoolboys in anticipation of the holiday they were to have. As a matter of fact, they were on the way back to Luxeuil near Belfort to take part in a great air-raid against the Mauser works at Oberndorf. There were ten Americans in the party—Lieutenant Thaw, with a wounded arm, Adjutants Prince, Hall, Lufbery and Masson, and Sergeants Rockwell, Hill, Johnson, Rumsey, and Pavelka. McConnell was in the hospital with a lame back due

to a smash-up. At Luxeuil they found a great force of British aviators, more than fifty pilots, and a thousand men as helpers, mechanicians, etc. Then followed a long delay while the Americans were waiting to receive a new type of Nieuport air-ship, more powerful and better-armed than the ones they had been using. It was of this loafing period that McConnell in his "Flying for France" wrote:

> It was about as much like war as a Bryan lecture. While I was in the hospital I received a letter written at this time from one of the boys. I opened it expecting to read of an air combat. It informed me that Thaw had caught a trout three feet long and that Lufbery had picked two baskets of mushrooms.

At last the new planes arrived. McConnell gives the following particulars of Rockwell's first flight in his new machine, of his encounter with a Boche ship and of its fatal ending:

> Kiffin Rockwell and Lufbery were the first to get their new machines ready and on the 23d of September went out for the first flight since the escadrille had arrived at Luxeuil. They became separated in the air, but each flew on alone, which was a dangerous thing to

do in the Alsace sector. . . . Just before Kiffin Rockwell reached the lines he spied a German machine under him, flying at 11,000 feet. I can imagine the satisfaction he felt in at last catching an enemy plane in our lines. Rockwell had fought more combats than the rest of us put together, and had shot down many German machines that had fallen in their lines, but this was the first time he had had an opportunity of bringing down a Boche in our territory.

A captain, the commandant of an Alsatian village, watched the aerial battle through his field glasses. He said that Rockwell approached so close to the enemy that he thought there would be a collision. The German craft, which carried two machine guns, had opened a rapid fire when Rockwell started his dive. He plunged through the stream of lead and only when very close to his enemy did he begin shooting. For a second it looked as though the German was falling, so the captain said, but then he saw the French machine turn rapidly nose down, the wings of one side broke off and fluttered in the wake of the airplane, which hurtled earthward in a rapid drop. It crashed into the ground in a small field—a field of flowers—a few hundred yards back of the trenches. It was not more than two and a half miles from the spot where Rockwell, in the month of May, brought down his first enemy machine. The Germans immediately opened up on the wreck with artillery fire. In spite of

the bursting shrapnel, gunners from a near-by battery rushed out and recovered poor Rockwell's broken body.

Rockwell was a great favorite with his companions. McConnell paid him this tribute:

No greater blow could have befallen the escadrille. Kiffin was its soul. He was loved and looked up to by not only every man in our flying corps, but by every one who knew him. Kiffin was imbued with the spirit of the cause for which he fought, and gave his heart and soul to the performance of his duty. He said: "I pay my part for Lafayette and Rochambeau," and he gave the fullest measure. The old flame of chivalry burned brightly in this boy's fine and sensitive being. With his death France lost one of her most valuable pilots.

Rockwell had won the coveted Médaille Militaire and the Croix de Guerre, on which appeared four palms, representing the four citations he had received in the orders of the French Army. For he was officially credited with having brought down four enemy airplanes and was believed to have accounted for numerous others that had fallen within the enemy's lines. His funeral was a splendid pageant, participated in by every Frenchman in the avia-

tion service at Luxeuil, by a battalion of French troops, by more than fifty of the British pilots, followed by a detachment of five hundred of their men; and by the little group of his American associates.

XXX

NORMAN PRINCE KILLED BY AN ACCIDENT

THREE weeks after Kiffin Rockwell was killed Norman Prince, to whose energy and persistence, as we have seen, the organization of the Lafayette Escadrille was due, met his death by an accident while making a landing at night.

A great lover of out-of-door sports, especially hunting and polo, Prince was a close student of the art of flying long before the war began. Born at Pride's Crossing, Massachusetts, he was educated at Groton and at Harvard, where he was graduated in 1908. After going through the Harvard Law School he went to Chicago to practise his profession. For recreation he took up the study and practice of aviation, then in its infancy; and he found this pursuit so much more congenial than the law that his avocation finally became his vocation, the scientific investigation of the construction and control of aircraft absorbing practically all of his time.

When the war began Prince was thus much more familiar with air-ships than were most young Americans. His sympathy with the cause for which the Allies were fighting, and especially his affection and admiration for France, prompted him to go abroad early in January, 1915, and offer his services to the aviation corps of the French Army. They were accepted, and he was sent to Pau, where he went into training. His previous experience with air-ships brought him quickly into active service. His intimate letters to members of his family, an address which he delivered at the Tavern Club, Boston, on the occasion of his last visit home on a furlough, in December, 1915, and a memoir by George F. Babbitt, are to be found in a memorial volume, published in 1917, called "Norman Prince: A Volunteer Who Died for the Cause He Loved."

A few paragraphs may be quoted from this volume. Writing on September 6, 1915, from northern France, near Arras, when he was in a French flying corps, Prince said:

I am happy and in the best of health. I sleep under canvas on a stretcher bed and eat

in the shed of an old farm house near by. I have nothing to complain of. I like it. There are ten American pilots with us in the French service and twelve others in training, with their number constantly increasing. Some day soon we will all be united in one escadrille—an Escadrille Américaine—that is my fondest ambition. I am devoting all my spare energies to organizing it, and all the American pilots here are giving me every encouragement and assistance in the work of preliminary organization.

Here is a selection from Prince's address at the Tavern Club, on the Christmas night following, describing a bombing expedition to the railway-station at Douai, as a result of which he won his first decoration, the Croix de Guerre:

I was fortunate enough that day to escape the range of the German flying machines by going further north and passing through the clouds, though I was shelled from a long distance all the way. I succeeded in dropping my bombs on a railroad station, one of which I saw explode in a bunch of freight cars in the railroad yard. As I was returning within our lines the Englishmen, by mistake, opened a brisk fire on me, which necessitated my going up into the clouds again. I proceeded due west until I ran out of gasoline, and I then descended in the dark near the headquarters of the English. It was my good fortune to land safely,

and on my arrival at my post I was brought before the English commander, who asked me to tell my story. Mine being one of the four machines out of twenty that had reached Douai in the raid, I was awarded a citation and given the right to wear a War Cross—my first decoration.

In the same address Prince gave an account of a perilous adventure which he had had in the midsummer previous, when for a month his headquarters were near Nancy:

During this month in Lorraine I experienced the hardest knock I had received up to that time. One day six German machines, fully equipped, bombarded Nancy and our aviation field. To retaliate, my squadron was sent out to bombard their field on the same afternoon. We started with thirty machines to a designated rendezvous, and fifty minutes later, after getting grouped, we proceeded to our ultimate destination. I had a very fast machine, and reached the German flying field without being hit. When about to let go my bombs and while my observer was aiming at the hangars of the Germans, my machine was attacked by them—one on the left and two on the right. I shouted to my observer to drop his bombs, which he did, and we immediately straightened out for home. While I was on the bank the Germans opened fire on me with their machine

guns, which were even more perilous than their shells.

My motor stopped a few moments afterwards. It had given out, and to make matters worse, a fourth German machine came at us directly in front. My observer, who was an excellent shot, let go at him, with the result that when last seen this German aeroplane was about four hundred feet below and quite out of control. The other Germans behind kept bothering us. If they had possessed ordinary courage they might have got us. Flying without any motive power compelled me to stand my machine on end to keep ahead of them. As we were nearing the French lines these Germans left us, but immediately batteries from another direction opened fire on us. As I was barely moving, I made an excellent target. One shell burst near enough to put shrapnel in my machine. It is marvellous how hard we can be hit by shrapnel and have no vital part of our equipment injured. I knew I was now over the French lines which I must have crossed at a height of four hundred metres. I finally landed in a field covered with white crosses marking the graves of the French and German soldiers who had fallen the previous September at this point.

Prince in February, 1916, was training to fly the fastest combat air-ship that the French then possessed—"quite a different instrument," he

says, "from the *avion canon*, which weighs three times more than these small chasing *appareils*." A little later, as has already been pointed out, his great ambition was realized in the formation of a purely American corps of fighting airplanes through which he hoped that more credit would redound to the United States than would be the case if these American volunteers were scattered among the various French aviation units.

He was at Verdun when Chapman was killed. Writing under date of June 26, 1916, he said:

> Poor Victor Chapman! He had been missing for a week and we knew there was only a very remote chance that he was a prisoner. He was of tremendous assistance to me in getting together the Escadrille. His heart was in it to make ours as good as any on the front. Victor was as brave as a lion and sometimes he was almost too courageous—attacking German machines whenever and wherever he saw them, regardless of the chances against him. . . . Victor was killed while attacking an aeroplane that was coming against Lufbery and me. Another unaccounted-for German came up and brought Victor down while he was endeavoring to protect us. A glorious death—*face à l'ennemi* and for a great cause and to save a friend!

When Prince and his associates of the American Escadrille returned a little later to Luxeuil they found preparations under way for the great Allied raid on the Mauser works at Oberndorf. Four of the battle-planes that went out on this raid as protection for the bombing machines were from the American Escadrille—those of Lieutenant de Laage de Mieux, Lufbery, Norman Prince, and Masson.

The raid was successful in every way, the Germans being taken by surprise. In the course of it Lufbery downed his fifth enemy machine, and thus qualified for the honor of being called an "Ace" in flying argot. It was when he was returning from this expedition on the night of the 12th of October, 1916, that Prince met with the accident that resulted a few days later in his death. When he was attempting to make a landing after dark, within the French lines, his air-ship struck a wire cable and was wrecked. The fall injured him so severely that he lived only a few days. Up to this time he had been engaged in no fewer than one hundred and twenty-two aerial engagements, and was officially credited with having

brought down five Boche planes in battle, and was known to have conquered four others not officially recorded. He had won, as has been noted, the Croix de Guerre and the Médaille Militaire; and the Croix de la Légion d'Honneur was sent to him as he lay in the hospital. He was buried with all military honors.

XXXI

JAMES McCONNELL, HISTORIAN

THE selections already reproduced from James R. McConnell's book, "Flying for France," must have given the reader a reasonably clear insight into the traits of character which endeared the writer of those pages to his comrades in the American Escadrille. He may indeed be called the historian of that organization during the first eventful six months of its career, so vivid are his pen-portraits of his associates and so graphic are his descriptions of their life on the ground and of their adventures in the air. Before entering aviation, as has already been noted, he had driven an ambulance in the American Ambulance Field Service from February to December, 1915, and had contributed to the *Outlook* the best account printed up to that time of the experiences of the men at Pont-à-Mousson and around Bois-le-Prêtre, where some of the heaviest fighting of the early

part of the war took place. In all of these writings McConnell showed that he was endowed with somewhat of that rare gift which Richard Harding Davis possessed to the full, of distinguishing clearly between the significant and the insignificant in the incidents and events of the day's work or play, and of investing details with color, life, and interest, and often with a charming humor peculiarly American.

The spirit with which he left his work in North Carolina to enter the ambulance service in France is indicated in this paragraph from the introduction to his book in which the editor, "F. C. P.," describes meeting him one day in January, 1915, in front of the court house in Carthage, when he announced that he was leaving on the following Wednesday:

> And then he went on to tell me, first, that, as he saw it, the greatest event in history was going on right at hand and that he would be missing the opportunity of a life-time if he did not see it. "These sand hills," he said, "will be here forever, but the war won't; and so I'm going." Then, as an afterthought, he added: "And I'll be of some use, too, not just a sight-seer, looking on; that wouldn't be fair."

As happened in the case of so many other young American volunteers, interest in the war as primarily a great adventure was gradually replaced in McConnell's mind by an absorbing desire to be of substantial assistance to the French people, who, it was found, were fighting the fight of liberty and justice against enormous odds. McConnell's account of the change is simple and direct:

> All along I had been convinced that the United States ought to aid in the struggle against Germany. With that conviction it was plainly up to me to do more than drive an ambulance. The more I saw the splendor of the fight the French were fighting, the more I began to feel like an *embusqué*—what the British call a "shirker." So I made up my mind to go into aviation.

McConnell learned to fly at Pau, and qualified as a pilot in season to become, as we have already seen, one of the original members of the Lafayette, or as he preferred to call it, the American, Escadrille, who assembled at Luxeuil, on the Alsatian front, in the spring of 1916. Under date of May 14 he gave, in a private letter, these details of his first expedition over

the enemy's lines in an *avion de chasse*, the function of which was, in his words, "to shoot down Boches or keep them away from our lines":

Well, I've made my first trip over the lines and proved a few things to myself. First, I can stand high altitudes. I had never been above 7,000 feet before, nor had I flown more than an hour. On my trip to Germany I went to 14,000 feet and was in air for two hours. I wore the fur head-to-foot combination they give one and paper gloves under the fur gloves you sent me. I was not cold. In a way it seemed amusing to be going out knowing as little as I do. My mitrailleuse had been mounted the night before. I had never fired it. Nor did I know the country at all even though I'd motored along our lines. I followed the others or I surely would have been lost. I shall have to make special trips to study the land and be able to make it out from my map which I carry on board. For one thing the weather was hazy and clouds obscured the view.

When the city of Mülhausen seemed directly under him McConnell "noted with keen satisfaction their invasion of real German territory." "The Rhine, too," he adds, with a touch of whimsical humor, "looked delightfully accessible."

After the squadron was transferred to the Verdun front McConnell noted that combats occurred on almost every sortie into the enemy territory. The Germans, as always, played the game cleverly, trusting that the eagerness of the young Americans to get into a fight would bring them beyond the German lines, where a superior force could be brought to bear against them. This is exactly what happened again and again, and accounted in large part for the number of casualties which the Americans suffered. "The Boches," wrote McConnell, "keep well within their lines, save occasionally, and we have to go over and fight them there."

Here is a description of the daily life McConnell was leading at Verdun from a private letter dated July 30:

Weather has been fine and we've been doing a lot of work. Our lieutenant—De Laage de Mieux—brought down a Boche. I had another beautiful smash-up. Prince and I had stayed too long over the lines. Important day, as an attack was going on. It was getting dark and we could see the tiny balls of fire the infantry light to show the low-flying observation machines their new positions. On return, as I

was over another aviation field my motor broke. I made for field. In darkness I couldn't judge my distance well and went too far. At edge of field there were trees and beyond a deep cut where road ran. I was skinning ground at 170 kilometers [about 100 miles] an hour and heading for trees. I saw soldiers running to be in at finish and I thought myself that James's hash was cooked, but I went between trees and ended up head-on on the opposite bank of road. My motor took the shock and my belt held me. As my tail went up it was cut in two by some very low 'phone wires. I wasn't bruised even. Took dinner with the officers there, who gave me a car to go home in afterward.

To-day I shared another chap's machine (Hill of Peekskill, who knows McCord), and got it shot up for him. De Laage, our lieutenant, and I made a sortie at noon. When in the German lines near Côte 304 I saw two Boches under me. I picked out the rear chap and dove. Fired a few shots and then tried to get under his tail and hit him from there. I missed and bobbed up alongside of him. Fine for the Boche but rotten for me. I could see his gunner working the mitrailleuse for fair, and felt his bullets darn close. I dove, for I could not shoot from that position, and beat it. He kept plunking away and all together put seven holes in my machine. One was only ten inches in front of me. De Laage was too far off to get to the Boche and ruin him while I was amusing him.

As the result of a lame back due to another smash-up, McConnell was in the hospital for several weeks, rejoining his fellow Americans of the Lafayette Escadrille some time after they had been transferred from Alsace to the Somme front in October. The winter of 1916–17 was comparatively quiet on the Somme and in the sector from Roye to Soissons. With the early spring, however, the activity increased.

McConnell's last flight took place on March 19, 1917, only a few weeks before the United States declared war against Germany. He made this flight in company with Edmond Genet, who, having been "at school" all the autumn and winter, had joined the American squadron a couple of months before. In a letter to his mother, dated March 20, 1917, as it appears in the "War Letters of Edmond Genet," McConnell's flying mate wrote:

We are all feeling decidedly blue because our oldest pilot of the escadrille—one of the four who were its first members (the other 3 were Prince, Chapman and Rockwell)—has been missing since yesterday morning and undoubtedly is on the other side of the lines—either dead or wounded and a prisoner. He is

McConnell, the one who wrote such a good account of the escadrille which was published in *World's Work*. He and I were out together yesterday morning over the new territory just captured by the French and English, and about ten o'clock, while well inside the enemy lines, we encountered two German biplane machines. I mounted to attack the nearest and left Mac to take care of the second, and it is the last seen of him. There were plenty of clouds and mist, and after I had finished my scrap with the one I attacked, in which I got one of my main upper wing-supports cut in half, a guiding-rod cut in half, several bullets through my upper wing, and half an explosive bullet in the side of my left cheek, which stunned me for a moment, I went down lower to look for "Mac" and help him if he was hard pressed, and looked all around and waited for fifteen minutes for him to show up, but I could see neither him nor the German machine which must have attacked him. My upper wing was in great danger of breaking off, the support being half cut through, my wound was bleeding and pained quite a bit, so I finally headed back for camp, hoping Mac had perhaps missed me and gone back before me. I had a driving wind to face going back and had to fly very low to get beneath heavy clouds to see my way.

When I got to ground on our field I looked in vain for Mac's machine. When I asked if he had returned my worst fears were confirmed. He had not, and we have, up to the present

time, had absolutely no news of him whatsoever. It's terrible, little Mother. I feel horribly over it, for I was the only one with him.

A week later Genet was able to report the finding of McConnell's body:

Jim McConnell has just gallantly earned a lonely grave out behind the present fighting-lines. I wrote to you last Tuesday—the day after he and I were out together, when we had to return, wounded, without him and with no definite news of him. Since then the Germans were forced back further and finally French troops came across a badly smashed Nieuport with the body of a sergeant pilot beside the ruins. All identification papers were gone and the d——d Boches had even taken off the flying clothes and even the boots and left the body where it had fallen. The number of the machine was sent in and so we knew it was Mac's.

The following morning, after a flight over the lines, I spiralled down over the location given and found the wreck—almost unrecognizable as an aeroplane, crushed into the ground at the edge of a shell-torn and wrecked little village. I circled over it for a few minutes and then back to camp to report. Our captain flew over that way the same morning to see about the body. When he returned he told us about the clothes and shoes having been stolen and said that Mac had been buried beside the road next to which he had fallen. There is no doubt

but that he was killed during the combat in the air and the machine crashed down full speed to the earth. Since that day I've chased two Boche machines, but could get up to neither, but I'll get one yet and more than one, or be dropped myself, to avenge poor Mac.

XXXII

GENET IN THE AMERICAN ESCADRILLE

YOUNG Edmond Genet was very happy when, early in June, 1916, he found himself no longer a Légionnaire, but a student at the French military aviation school at Buc, not far from Paris. "We're treated finely here," he wrote to his brother, "have excellent quarters, the food is good, and, except for the uniform and other personal clothes which we buy ourselves, we're fitted out extremely well." The future looked very bright to him. "This is what one can call the real thing. This is sport with all the fascination and excitement and sporting chances any live fellow could ever wish for."

Under the stress of war the previous year of 1915, however, had witnessed such a marvellous development, both in the construction of airships and in the art of controlling them, that a much longer time was required than formerly to qualify a novice for this increasingly difficult

branch of the army service. The consequence was that it was not until about the middle of the following January, in 1917, that Genet at last found himself at the front as a fully qualified *pilote aviateur* in the American Escadrille. In the meantime, while learning all the tricks of the pilot of an *avion de chasse*, Genet, like his fellow compatriots in the different branches of the French service, was deeply interested in the result of the presidential election in the United States, especially in its relation to the war. His elation over the early reports of the election of Hughes was followed, when later news announced that Wilson had been re-elected, by hot indignation and a feeling of bitter humiliation. To a friend he wrote, under date of November 15:

Where has all the old genuine honor and patriotism and humane feelings of our countrymen gone? What are those people, who live on their farms in the West, safe from the chances of foreign invasion, made of, anyway? They decided the election of Mr. Wilson. Don't they know anything about the invasion of Belgium, the submarine warfare against their own countrymen and all the other outrages which all neutral countries, headed by the United

States, should have long ago rose up and suppressed and which, because of the past administration's "peace at any price" attitude have been left to increase and increase? They crave for peace, those unthinking, uncaring voters, and what's the reason? Why, they're making money hand over fist because their country is at peace—at peace at the price of its honor and respect in the whole civilized world—at peace while France and Belgium are being soaked in blood by a barbarous invasion—while the very citizens of the United States are being murdered and those same invaders are laughing behind our backs—even in our very faces. . . . It couldn't be possible for Americans in America to feel the same bitter way as Americans over here among the very scenes of this war's horrors. It's not comprehensible over there where peace reigns supreme. Come over here and you'll be engulfed like the rest of us in the realization of the necessity of the whole civilized world arming itself against this intrusion of utter brutality and militaristic arrogance. Peace—God forbid such happiness until the invaders have been victoriously driven back behind their own borders, knowing the lesson of their folly in treading ruthlessly on unoffending neutral territory and all the rest of their deeds of piracy and the blood of France and Belgium has dried up.

During his period of training Genet met with the usual accidents to which students are sub-

ject. Once he fell fifty yards or so in a fifty-horse-power Blériot monoplane, smashing the machine to "pieces no larger than matchsticks." Being strapped in tightly, however, he escaped with only a badly wrenched hip and back. On another occasion he turned over completely in a Nieuport plane, without the slightest injury to himself. For diversion he was able, on one of his trips to Paris, to enjoy a performance of "Samson et Delila" at the opera. At last, on January 20, 1917, he reached the front as a member of the Lafayette Escadrille, finding himself, oddly enough, in the same neighborhood where, nearly two years earlier, he had begun his service in the Foreign Legion.

In a letter to his brother Rivers, Genet gave this description of his first flight over the lines in his new 110 horse-power Nieuport:

The first morning I flew over the lines I went 4,200 metres (about 12,600 ft.) which is some altitude for a clear and very cold morning. The view was wonderful and just about 500 metres below and to our right (I was out with one of the other fellows) shells fired at us from a German anti-aircraft battery were bursting. A light covering of snow helped to accentuate

the outlines of the ground, the railroad-lines, roads, villages, etc. That was one of our exceptional clear days though. This is surely no kid's game. It's mighty tiring and trying on the nerves and one feels it lots at the end of each day's flying. One has to keep constantly on the alert—and a mighty wide-awake alert too. Manœuvring the machine has practically to be done involuntarily—mechanically, I should say, and keep all the senses absolutely on the alert for the enemy and the course taken. The enemy machines drop down behind one with blamed suddenness and then there's the devil to pay. It's *some* job! There isn't a great deal of danger of being brought down by shells although there have been machines brought down that way—mostly with a lot of luck on the part of the gunners. Both sides, though, do possess some mighty good anti-aircraft batteries.

Genet made many flights and had several combats with German air-ships, on one occasion coming very near getting lost in the enemy's territory, owing to the thickness of the weather. Finally came the expedition with McConnell, Genet's description of which has already been given. Genet himself was a fatalist and expected to meet the same end as that which had overtaken Chapman, Rockwell, Prince, and

now McConnell. But he faced the probability with high courage. "All we ask," he said, "is to be able to bring down a few of the enemy machines before our turn comes." Genet's last letter to his "dear little Mother" was dated April 15, a little more than a week after the United States declared war against Germany. He was killed on the following day while making a sortie over the lines with Lufbery.

Lufbery's account of his companion's death was as follows:

One afternoon, at half-past two, Genet and I were ordered to make a patrol on the lines between St. Quentin and La Fère. I was leading and everything seemed to be all right. At about 3 o'clock somewhere around Moy the German anti-aircrafts started to shell us. I saw very plainly three shells bursting right behind Genet's machine, about one hundred yards from it. As we get that very often I did not pay much attention to it. Many times I myself had been shelled much closer than that and nothing had happened. Anyway, I don't know if he got hit or not, but he suddenly turned around and went toward the French lines. I followed him for about three or four minutes to make sure that he was taking the right direction, after that I went back to the lines to finish my patrol duty. There is another

thing: Genet that day was not feeling well. He went out in the morning for a moment, and when he landed he told us that there was something wrong with him and went to bed. We did not want to let him go to the afternoon sortie, but he insisted, saying he was now much better.

Soldiers who saw him fall say that the machine got in a corkscrew dive at about 1,400 yards high, finally a wing came off and the whole thing crashed on the ground.

I do not know exactly what happened, but might suppose that, being ill, he fainted. He also might have got wounded by a piece of shell.

Genet was a nice little fellow and everybody in the Escadrille was very fond of him. He was very brave and I am sure he would have become one of the best.

In a letter to Paul Rockwell, Sergeant Walter Lovell, of Newtonville, Massachusetts, then in the American Escadrille, after having been graduated, as so many of his fellows were, from the American Ambulance service—told of the finding of Genet's body at a spot a few miles within the French lines and not far from where McConnell fell a few weeks earlier. "He had fallen with the motor in full speed in the middle of the road, which proves that the German shell had killed him or rendered him unconscious."

He was buried with full military honors at Ham.

Genet is thought to have been the first American to be killed after the United States entered the war. In accordance with his request, his body was wrapped in the French flag, and both the French and the American flags were placed upon his grave. Finally, it is difficult to read dry-eyed these paragraphs from Paul Rockwell's letter to the boy's mother:

> I feel a sympathy with you that I cannot find words to express. I would have written you ere now, but the loss of dear little Edmond coming right after that of Jim gave me such a feeling of the "blues" that I could not write.
>
> Anyway we know that Edmond fell for something worth while, and that he was so fine an idealist he didn't mind dying for the cause. He is over there with Kiffin and Jim and the other boys and it will not be long until we will be with them too.
>
> I think that one enters eternity with the same force and strength that one quits this world with, and that one falling in battle in the full bloom of youth and energy has a better place in the next world than those who linger here and die of illness or age. Anyhow I would change places with any one of the boys who have died so gallantly.

XXXIII

MAJOR LUFBERY, ACE OF AMERICAN ACES

NO more romantic career than that of Raoul Lufbery, of Wallingford, Connecticut, world-rover and soldier of fortune, has thus far emerged from the turmoil and smoke of the great war. That a wanderer for years over the face of the earth, born of an American father and a French mother, should have finally found himself on the bloody fields of France and should have won, by his brilliant conquests of the Boches in the air, the three highest honors the French could bestow upon him, together with the British Military Cross for distinguished service, must seem indeed like a fairy-tale.

Lufbery was born thirty-four years ago in Clermont, France, and was brought up after he was six, when his mother died, by his maternal grandmother. Unlike most French boys, and owing possibly to his American blood, he developed a roving disposition—wanted to see the world. So when he was fifteen he ran away

and went to Paris. But Paris disappointed him—there were too many people and there were too few opportunities for quiet meditation, of which he was increasingly fond, even at that early age. The conventional life did not appeal to him.

Then began the wanderings of this Franco-American Ulysses. First he sailed to Algiers, where, being ill, he went to the hospital. Being a likable sort of a fellow, sympathetic by nature and deft with his hands, he became, on his recovery, an orderly in the hospital and stayed there two years. Speaking of his adaptability for army service, his brother Charles said to a writer for the New York *Sun:*

> He was always ready to risk everything, and the moment's joy was all he wanted from it. Ah, he is splendid for an army! He could dress wounds, or cook or comfort the wounded, and do all those simple things which so few know how to do at all. He ought to know them. He has made his living since he was fifteen.

From Algiers Lufbery wandered to Egypt and thence, after many adventures, to Constantinople, through Roumania and finally to Ger-

many, learning, while working in a brewery at Fulda, to speak and read German. But he wanted to see the rest of the world and to visit his own people, his father, his brothers, and his half-sisters in New England. So he made his way to Hamburg and worked until he had money enough to take him to New York. He reached Wallingford in 1906, but family ties were not strong enough to keep him there permanently. Regular work in a silver factory was not to his taste. So, after a year and a half, he set forth again, making brief stays in New Orleans, where he worked in a bakery, and in San Francisco, where he was a waiter in a hotel. In 1908 he was in Honolulu and from there he went to the Philippines, where he served in the United States Army for more than a year. In 1911 his people in Wallingford received word from him that he was in Canton, China, and had a place in the Imperial Chinese customs service.

While he was in the Far East Lufbery got his first taste of aviation and through this experience was led to offer his services to the French in the war. The circumstances were

thus stated by the New York *Evening Post* in a sketch of Lufbery:

> Several years ago he met the aviator, Marc Pourpe, in Asia, who trained him as his assistant. Lufbery discovered for the first time that he was an American when he attempted to enlist with Pourpe at the outbreak of the war, and was rejected on account of his nationality. He was finally permitted to go to the front as Pourpe's mechanic. Pourpe was killed soon afterward, and Lufbery importuned the French authorities for permission to be trained as a pilot, and his request was finally granted. He joined the Lafayette Escadrille when it was sent to the Verdun sector in May, 1916.

Before becoming a member of the Lafayette Escadrille Lufbery had gone through the usual experience of beginners in bombing machines. He contributed to *Everybody's Magazine* for February, 1918, a description of one such expedition in which he took part in January, 1916, as the pilot of a 140 horse-power Voisin airplane. The fleet consisted of no fewer than forty ships and the objective was the Metz-Sablons railway-station. Lufbery pictured the approach to this objective through shrapnel fire, and continued as follows:

A few minutes later I found myself over the spacious station of Metz. This was our objective. The machine in front of me executed a semi-circle in order to give the slower aeroplanes time to come up. Handicapped by my 140 h. p. I took no part in this manœuvre, but flew straight to the point, where I was the first to arrive.

Our coming must have been announced, as several enemy machines came from every direction to meet us. One of them advanced toward me. Quickly I turned my head to see if my observer was on his guard. His machine gun was pointed at the enemy, his finger on the trigger. At a distance of one hundred and fifty metres, the enemy machine made a brisk movement to get beyond our range, turning to enable its gunner to fire at us. But this manœuvre was useless, for the greater number of the biplane machines have two guns, one stationary, which fires from the front, the other mounted on a turret in the rear.

I kept my eye on my adversary. I could clearly see the black painted cross on his fusilage and helm. The fight began. We exchanged a shower of bullets. The Boche piquéd, apparently having had enough. I did not think it worth my while to follow him, as there was nothing now to obstruct our way, and I had an important mission to fulfil.

Through the wind shield I could distinguish railroad tracks, trains, stationary and on the move, stores of goods, hangars, etc.

My observer tapped me on the shoulder and signed for me to go ahead. Another tap informed me that the bombs had been dropped. Our mission was accomplished. All that remained for us to do now was to get back to camp as soon as possible. The Boches were hurrying up in numbers. We had to keep a watch on all sides. We were surprised by a monoplane Fokker, which hurled at us a shower of bullets and departed before we had time to respond. Two or three short, sharp, familiar sounds told me that my machine was hit. But my motor continued its regular throb, and my observer reported that the gasoline tank was untouched.

The wind blowing from the north facilitated our return. In a short time we were over our lines. Then I laughed, without knowing why. I looked at my observer, and he too laughed. We were both feeling good.

Lufbery's skill as a fighting pilot developed rapidly after he joined the American Escadrille. From that admirable record of the achievements of the members of this corps, McConnell's "Flying for France," two instances may be cited. This relates to a combat over the Verdun battlefield:

A pilot seldom has the satisfaction of beholding the result of his bull's-eye bullet.

Rarely, so difficult is it to follow the turnings and twistings of the dropping 'plane, does he see his fallen foe strike the ground. Lufbery's last direct hit was an exception, for he followed all that took place from a balcony seat. I myself was in the "nigger-heaven," so I know. We had set out on a sortie together just before noon one August day, and for the first time on such an occasion had lost each other over the lines. Seeing no Germans, I passed my time hovering over the French observation machines. Lufbery found one, however, and promptly brought it down. Just then I chanced to make a southward turn, and caught sight of an airplane falling out of the sky into the German lines.

As it turned over, it showed its white belly for an instant, then seemed to straighten out, and planed downward in big zigzags. The pilot must have gripped his controls even in death, for his craft did not tumble as most do. It passed between my line of vision and a wood, into which it disappeared. Just as I was going down to find out where it landed, I saw it again skimming across a field, and heading straight for the brown band beneath me. It was outlined against the shell-racked earth like a tiny insect, until just northwest of Fort Douaumont it crashed down upon the battlefield. A sheet of flame and smoke shot up from the tangled wreckage. I watched it burn a moment or two, then went back to the observation machines.

I thought Lufbery would show up and point

to where the German had fallen. He failed to appear, and I began to be afraid it was he whom I had seen come down, instead of an enemy. I spent a worried hour before my return homeward. After getting back I learned that Lufbery was quite safe, having hurried in after the fight to report the destruction of his adversary before somebody else claimed him, which is only too frequently the case. Observation posts, however, confirmed Lufbery's story, and he was of course very much delighted. Nevertheless, at luncheon I heard him murmuring, half to himself, "Those poor fellows!"

Noticing on another occasion during a fight with a Boche that a German plane was over French territory, Lufbery swooped down near his adversary, waved a good-by, which was returned, and "whirred off to chase the other representative of Kultur." McConnell continued:

He caught up with him and dove to the attack, but he was surprised by a German he had not seen. Before he could escape three bullets entered his motor, two passed through the fur-lined combination he wore, another ripped open one of his woolen flying boots, his airplane was riddled from wing-tip to wing-tip, and other bullets cut the elevating plane. Had

he not been an exceptional aviator he never would have brought safely to earth so badly damaged a machine. It was so thoroughly shot up that it was junked as being beyond repairs.

Lufbery's conquests in his combats with the Germans won for him in quick succession the Croix de Guerre, the Médaille Militaire and the Croix de la Légion d'Honneur from the French, and the Military Cross for Distinguished Service from his British associates. On December 27, 1917, he wrote in quaint phraseology to his brother Charles in Wallingford, as quoted in the sketch in the New York *Sun* already referred to, as follows:

Now, I am looking like a Christmas tree, medals all over my chest. The last one I was decorated with is a Montenegrin order, with a ribbon red, blue and white. Though it has not the value of the French Legion of Honor or the Military Medal, I am awfully proud to wear it.

You certainly have heard through the newspapers about my commission in the American aviation, but the truth is I have been appointed to that rank (Major) a month ago, but I cannot wear the uniform yet, as the French are still holding my discharge.

I now have sixteen official German machines to my credit, and many others unofficial. On December 2 I brought two of them down.

Well, how is everything up at the old Wallingford? I would like very much to see it back again. Unfortunately, I must to give it up for the present. For I should like to organize some sort of a little flying circus for the Germans before I leave here.

Major Lufbery, however, was destined never to see "the old Wallingford" "back again." For a few months later, on Sunday, May 19, 1918, he was killed by a fall from his machine, which had apparently been set on fire by incendiary bullets from a huge German air-ship, with two guns, in a desperate combat over the city of Toul. At the time of his death he was officially credited with having shot down eighteen enemy planes, far and away the most noteworthy achievement of any American in the aviation service.

One of those who took part in the military funeral of Major Lufbery the next day was a fellow aviator, Lieutenant Kenneth P. Culbert, who had been graduated at Harvard in the previous year. In the middle of a long letter dated

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Major Raoul Lufbery.

May 21 from Lieutenant Culbert to Professor C. T. Copeland, of Cambridge, which was printed in the *Harvard Alumni Bulletin*, appeared this description of the funeral of Major Lufbery:

Perhaps you'd like to hear of Major Lufbery's funeral—you doubtless know that he was shot down, and fell from his burning plane into a courtyard. He had done a great deal in uniting the French and Americans,—he was the greatest of our airmen and seventh on the list of French aces,—he had all the qualities of a soldier, audacity, utter fearlessness, persistency, and tremendous skill,—in every way, sir, he was a valuable man.

As we marched to his interment the sun was just sinking behind the mountain that rises so abruptly in front of T——; the sky was a faultless blue, and the air was heavy with the scent of the blossoms on the trees in the surrounding fields. An American and French general led the procession, following close on to a band which played the funeral march and "Nearer My God to Thee" in so beautiful a way that I for one could hardly keep my eyes dry. Then followed the officers of his squadron and of my own—and after us an assorted group of Frenchmen famous in the stories of this war, American officers of high rank, and two American companies of infantry, separated by a French one.

How slowly we seemed to march as we went to his grave, passing before crowds of American nurses in their clean white uniforms, and a throng of patients and French civilians! He was given a full military burial; with the salutes of the firing squad, and the two repetitions of taps, one answering the other from the west. General E—— made a brief address, one of the finest talks I have ever heard any man give—while throughout all the ceremony French and American planes circled the field. In all my life I have never heard taps blown so beautifully as on that afternoon—even some of the officers joined the women there in quietly dabbing at their eyes with white handkerchiefs. France and United States had truly assembled to pay a last tribute to one of their soldiers. My only prayer is that somehow through some means I can do as much as he for my country before I too wander west—if in that direction I am to travel.

On the very next day, as Fate willed it, May 22, the writer of these words was killed in combat, his spirit, one may believe, joining that of his comrade Lufbery in the journey "westward."

XXXIV

MAJOR THAW, PIONEER AMERICAN AVIATOR

THE opening chapter of this book was devoted to some of the experiences of young William Thaw, of Yale, in the Foreign Legion. Its final chapter shall treat of the exploits in the aviation service of France and of the United States, of Major William Thaw, of Pittsburgh, now four years older than he was when he decided that this was to be a conflict between civilization and barbarism, and that it was up to him as a good American to take active part in it. At last accounts he was still fighting the Boches, the only survivor over the firing-lines of that gallant little band of American volunteers who formed the original Lafayette Escadrille, and the pioneer as well, in the French air service, of them all.

Thaw joined the Legion as the quickest and easiest way of getting into the firing-lines. But, as we have seen, his experience with this branch of the French service was disappointing,

and as soon as he was able to pull enough official wires he got himself transferred, in December, 1914, into the French flying service. He was not altogether a novice in an air machine, for, like Norman Prince, he had done some flying in the United States before the war, though not, as he admits in one of his letters, over land. He returned to the United States on a brief furlough in the autumn of 1916; and this visit recalled to a writer in the *Yale Alumni Weekly* that at the beginning of his sophomore year Thaw had arrived at New Haven in a hydro-aeroplane.

At the end of December, 1914, Thaw was at Mervel, attached to Escadrille D 6 of the French Aviation Corps as an observer. His capacity for this work and his personality evidently impressed the French officers, and they made his pathway easy. The contrast, moreover, between his present mode of life and that of the trenches made him very contented.

From the same group of Thaw's letters to his family from which quotations have already been made—originally published in the *Yale Alumni Weekly*—a few more selections relating

to this period may be taken. Thus, under date of December 28, 1915, he wrote:

About three or four times a week I have to go on little joy-rides in a good machine (we have six 80-gnome Deperdussins) with a *good* pilot (two of the six here have won the Legion of Honor and two the Military Medal), mark the position of German batteries, and regulate by means of smoke signals the firing of our guns.

A career as an observer and as a regulator of artillery-fire did not, however, satisfy Thaw's ambition; he wanted to fly his own battle-plane! So he schemed and manœuvred to secure admittance to a military training-camp, where he could obtain in time a license to fly. Finally, in February, 1915, he carried his point and was sent to the Reserve of Pilots, as it was called, Caudron Division, at Buc. His letter of February 14 tells how he evaded being sent to school at Pau:

They wanted to send me to the school at Pau, but I know what schools are, so I told them that my name was W. Caudron Thaw, and finally persuaded them to give me a try. I was rather up against it though, as I'd never

flown on land, never with a rotary motor, never with the propeller in front, and never with that control, and at Buc they have nothing but the big regulation 80 H. P. machines. But one of my favorite mottoes is, "try anything once," so the second day I got a ten-minute ride as a passenger to get the feel of the machine, and since then, in the occasional streaks of fairly good weather, I have flown alone twice, and the Captain says that I can take the brevet militaire the first good day. But that is very simple, as they have eliminated the cross-country tests, and all you have to do is to stay up for one hour at two thousand metres.

So I hope to be back at the front in two or three weeks (and this time with a good job instead of being a ditch-digger), probably with my old escadrille, which, I believe, is going to change to Caudrons. Anyway, the Captain (of D. 6) who is now at Buc practising, having changed from Dep. to Caudron, has asked to have me with him, whether he takes the same escadrille or not, so I should worry!

Under date of April 7 Thaw wrote that the French aviation centre had been moved from Buc to Bourget, only a few miles from Paris, which was easily reached by tram-car. Evidently he had made good progress, for he said that he had been acting as a sort of instructor, "teaching green *observateurs* how to observe."

At the time of writing Thaw had just reached the front again and was glad to be there:

The Caudron, though very slow (113 kils.* p. h.), is really a remarkable little machine. Day before yesterday four of us came over here to Luneville, where we are located indefinitely on the *champ des manœuvres*, about 8 kils. behind the lines; the other two are coming over later. . . . It is interesting to note that although I am supposed here to be a pretty good *pilote*, it was my first cross-country flight. And it certainly is sport sailing along through the clouds, steering by map and compass.

Under date of April 18 Thaw wrote of his first meeting with a German "Taube":

Another short letter, just to say "Hello" and "*tout va bien.*"—The past few days since I wrote you have passed very quickly—just enough work to seem to be busy, and very, very interesting work at that. Have made six *reconnaissances* to date, and to-morrow morning I do my first regulating of artillery fire, having tried out my wireless to-day. Have so far flown about 1200 kils.† over German territory, and have more than once brought back fairly important information. So, as I said before, it certainly feels great to be really doing some-

* About 70 miles per hour.
† Approximately 750 miles.

thing.—Met my first and only "Taube" last Thursday morning, and, believe me, I was scared. But so was he and beat it straight down, much to my relief, as we were 40 kils. from our lines.—Every day something new, something exciting. It's a great life. . . .

McConnell notes that during the autumn of 1915 Thaw was doing excellent work at the front as the pilot of a Caudron biplane carrying an observer. During the autumn and winter, however, he was co-operating heartily with Norman Prince and Elliott Cowdin in their efforts to persuade the French authorities to allow them to form a purely American flying squadron.

When, late in the winter, the project seemed likely to succeed, Thaw is found elaborately planning to have Captain Thenault appointed to the command of the new squadron. Thus in a letter dated February 21, 1916, Victor Chapman wrote:

Now we must have a French Captain. But first, as to the people who are running this. They are, of course, the three you know—Thaw, Cowdin and Prince. Thaw, though the youngest, has perhaps more weight, being a *sous*-Lieutenant. Thaw wants his old chief at his Caudron Escadrille, *Capitaine* Thenault,

a charming fellow, but young. Balsan, after being asked to look into the matter, gave some uncertain answer. Thaw wants him if it's physically possible. Meanwhile we wait, and if nothing is done, we greatly fear that Thenault may be definitely refused us and some "service" *Capitaine* be dumped upon us to make our life unpleasant.

Thaw as usual carried his point: Captain Thenault was put in command of the Lafayette Escadrille, with Lieutenant de Laage de Mieux second in command. A year later Edmond Genet, in one of his letters describing the American Escadrille as it then was, wrote of Thenault:

We have a very pleasant captain of the escadrille, and the lieutenant (de Laage) is a dandy fellow. Of course, Thaw, who is a lieutenant, looks out for us a good deal, but de Laage is our regular lieutenant. Both he and the captain speak English—particularly de Laage. We all eat together in one mess, and our cook is an A1 man.

Thaw and Cowdin had become expert fighting pilots before the Lafayette Escadrille was finally assembled on the Alsatian front in May,

1916, and had seen service at Verdun, where Cowdin had brought down a German machine, and by so doing had become the first American to win the Médaille Militaire—"the highest decoration," McConnell calls it, "that can be awarded a non-commissioned officer or private." Almost before the members of the squadron had got settled at Bar-le-Duc, after the transfer from the Alsatian front, Thaw brought down a Fokker one morning. In the afternoon of the same day, however, in a big combat far behind the German lines, he was wounded in the arm. His wound bled profusely, but he succeeded in landing just within the French lines, although in a dazed condition. French soldiers carried him, too weak to walk, to a field dressing-station, and from there he was sent to a Paris hospital. On his recovery he rejoined the American Escadrille.

The latest information concerning him was in a news despatch dated April 24, 1918, which stated that Major Thaw—like Lufbery, he had been taken into the aviation service of the United States Army with the rank of major—commanding the Lafayette Escadrille, had just

brought down his fifth enemy plane and a captive balloon on the same day, and that he was thenceforth to be classed among the "aces" in aviation in France. Long may he live to fly!

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